



68 ILLUSTRATED PAGES OF TERROR AND SUSPENSE

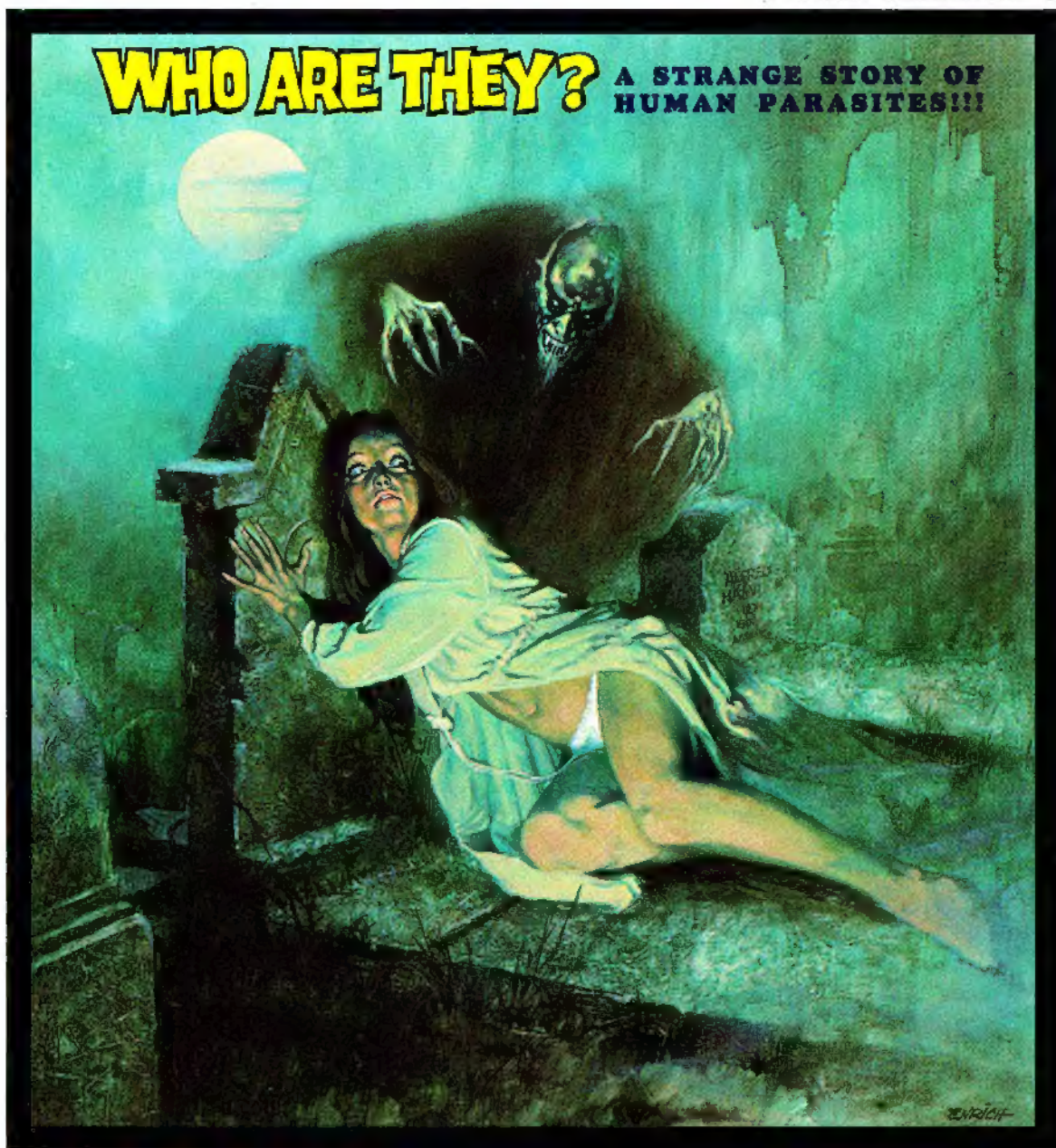
EERIE

EERIE
37

JAN. 1972

563206
A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 60¢

WHO ARE THEY? A STRANGE STORY OF
HUMAN PARASITES!!!



"DETHSLAKER" PLUS FIVE FANTASTIC TALES BY THE
WORLD'S BEST ARTISTS & WRITERS!!!



EERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY:

MAN HAS WHISPERED LEGENDS OF *SEA SERPENTS* SINCE THE FIRST DAY HE TOOK TO WATER! BUT THERE IS ANOTHER FORM OF SERPENTINE CREATURE WHICH PLAGUED THE IMAGINATIONS OF THE WORLD'S EARLY MEN IN THE *SKY*! IT WAS KNOWN AS THE...

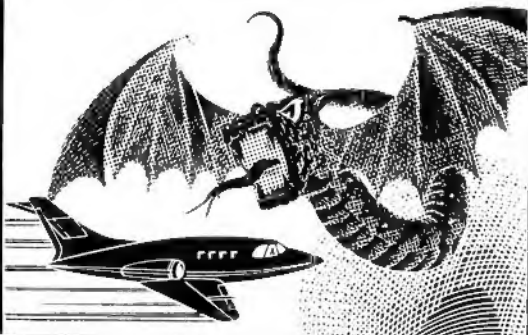
AIR SERPENT

WHEN MAN'S EARLY EFFORTS IN *FLIGHT* BROUGHT HIM HIGHER AND HIGHER INTO THE SKY, IT WAS QUICKLY DISCOVERED THAT ALL *SIGHT* OF THE EARTH WAS *LOST* THE *HIGHER* ONE FLEW!!



WITH THE CLOUD COVERING BELOW, IT WAS AS IF THE EARLY AEROPLANES WERE CAPABLE OF TRANSPORTING MAN TO AN EERIE, MYSTERY FILLED *NETHER-WORLD!* WHERE THE THIN OXYGEN AND THE LACK OF *LIGHT* PLAYED STRANGE TRICKS ON A MAN'S SUGGESTIVE *MIND!* RUMORS OF THE INHABITANTS OF THIS NETHER-WORLD, GIGANTIC *WINGED SERPENTS*, WERE QUICK TO SPRING UP ONCE MAN WAS IN THE *AIR!!* EACH PLANE 'LOST OVER SEA' OR 'DOWNED BUT NOT RECOVERED' GAVE CREDIBILITY TO THE SERPENT TALES! *TODAY*, HOWEVER, WE CAN *LAUGH* AT THIS EARLY FLYER'S LEGEND...

...FOR EVERYONE *KNOWS* THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS *AIR SERPENTS* ...OR *IS* THERE?!



EERIE

JAN. 1972

NO. 37

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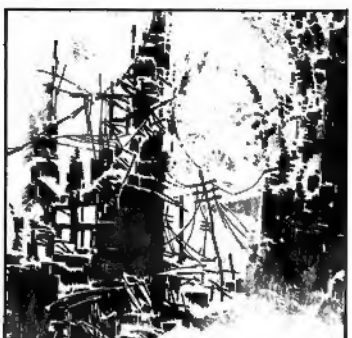
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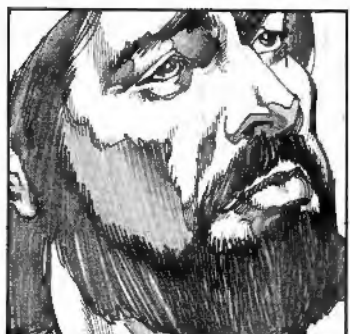
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DEAR COUSIN EERIE

I've recorded most of the names Uncle Creepy has shot at you—such as Hog Head, Gnome, Flab Face, Jelly-Belly, Pimple-Dimples, Pumpkin Head, Spacehead, etc. I don't think it's fair. Do you? You should tell HIM a thing or two! For your sake, don't take this lightly.

CHIP SHELTON
Branford, Conn.



Don't worry, Chip. Prune head's sarcasm is the last refuge of an inferior intellect.

"Good Lord!" I can hear you mutter as you tear open the envelope. "Another one of those letters telling me how to run my magazine!" I suppose you're right in a sense. I'm the first to admit that I know nothing about the complications of putting out a highly successful horror magazine. I do have some questions and suggestions however. Can marking pens be used on Fan-Fare page sketches? (Unadvisable—ed.) Please persuade Ken Barr to write and illustrate another werewolf story. His work on "I, Werewolf" in EERIE #30 was great! Though no one will ever unseat Fra-zetta from his throne as King of the Comic Artists, Enrich deserves special praise for his superb work on the cover of EERIE #35.

ARNOLD M. FENNER
Kansas City, Kansas

If you continue to produce magazines like EERIE #35, you will lose several customers. Using nudity and a severed head on the cover cheapens the magazine considerably.

RON SOPP
Dover, Delaware



Most readers really liked the cover, Ron. Most of the letters refer to it glowingly. The cover pictured a horrifying scene, horrifying at least for whoever got decapitated. For the record, the girl was not nude. Scantily clad, yes... but nude, no. Take a look. (See cover right.)

EERIE #35 was a breath of fresh and stale air. It's become increasingly apparent that scripting has taken a back seat to artwork. While we are being given finely rendered drawings by excellent artists (new and old), we are simultaneously handed poor writing. To start with, the copy on "Monster Gallery" doesn't seem to take us anywhere but the art is admirable (although the last panel hardly depicted a monster). "Retribution" comes to us with fine art and equal script until the end when its dramatic sense flees in the night. Same for "The Comet's Curse." You're stretching them out too far. "The Tower of the Demon Dooms" had neat art and a story so dull I almost fell asleep. The title "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" had nothing to do with the story but I very much enjoyed Victor Fuente's artwork. "Like Cats and Dogs!" left me shrieking with laughter rather than horror. Don't let me forget to mention the cover which was great. Let's see more by Enrich.

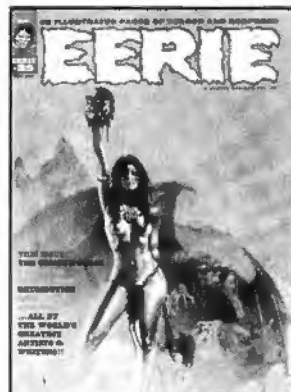
STEVE CASAW
Morris Plains, N.J.



A scene from Douglas Moench's "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" (EERIE #35). Victor Fuente's artwork on the story impressed quite a few readers. Wrote reader Lex Reibestein, "the artwork was reminiscent of greats of the past".

Frank Brunner's fabulous artwork on "The Comet's Curse" was the highlight of EERIE #35. I've begun to look forward to at least one S-F story per issue and I missed one this time. That un-silent majority that screams against S-F is too loud.

CARL BONASERA
Chicago, Ill.



Enrich's cover on EERIE #35 was much praised by readers.

"I really look forward to one Science Fiction story per issue. That un-silent majority that screams against Science Fiction is too loud!"

EERIE #35 was a step in the right direction. To begin with, the cover was excellent. "Retribution" was a good story. "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" was a refreshing change of pace. Very much enjoyed "Money" by Sanho Kim. One suggestion: keep doing previews of coming attractions.

DAVE VIRRILL
Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y.

"The Tower of the Demon Dooms" in EERIE #35 was good in both art and story. At times, Mike Ploog's art could almost pass for the great Will Eisner's. "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" brought back the golden

"The Sound of Wings" was undoubtedly the best story. Art and story were excellent. "Parting is Such Sweet Horror" had lots of guts and blood. Hewetson's story was great because it starred you. The worst story was "Food for Thought." I dig the previews of coming attractions and I hope you continue them.

ROGER SCHULTZ
Corfu, N.Y.

I thought the cover of EERIE #35 was great. Let's have more like it. Sanho Kim does marvelous work. One of your letter writers in #35 told you to cut down on S-F. Don't! I like S-F and it constitutes horror. We all know you can't please all of the people all of the time.

MATTHEW RICHARDS
Vancouver, British Columbia



Glad you liked the cover, Matthew. We promise more great covers and more great work by Sanho Kim in the future. As for pleasing readers, I try and do my best to horrify as many as I possibly can.

I must commend you on EERIE #34 which I just received in the mail. Great! Don't worry about old Pickle Nose, Cousin. However, Miss VAMPIRELLA is quite attractive. Don't you agree?

BILL CHONG
Elmhurst, Queens



She's alright but I've seen better faces on wristwatches.

I'm disappointed in your writing and scripting. I'm sure you make do with what you have but not for 60¢. Please run more science fiction.

DENNIS SMITH
Alexandria, La.

You and Uncle CREEPY should call a truce and wage an all out war against VAMPIRELLA. Your present feud is getting stale anyway. Why should you and Uncle tear each other apart while Vampi improves with the coming of each issue?

STEVEN EPSTEIN
Hoffman Estates, Ill.

Some readers have asked you to run more blood and violence in your stories. I say stay as you are now.

JEFF PAUL
Corona, N.Y.



We bloody well will.

Being a faithful reader of EERIE, I would like to make a few comments on EERIE #34.

As always, your covers are great. Enjoyed the cover of EERIE #35. I think you should run all your stories in color. The blood would show up better. Color is what makes your covers so good. Keep up the good work.

ERLE CHENEY
Starkville, Miss.



Color! Scholor! Who wants to see blood in color anyway?

I'm one of your newest fans. EERIE #34 was wild, especially "Eye of Cyclops." I wish you'd put out more stories about werewolves.

JONATHAN REECE
Cortez, Colo.

Take it from me, Cuz. Some of us S-F fans love stories of outer space. If other readers want violent murder stories, all they have to do is look out the window. Keep doing S-F.

JOHN RUDD
Jersey City, N.J.

EERIE #35 was good. I liked the cover and most of the stories. "Retribution" and "The Comet's Curse" weren't that great because the endings were expected. "Money" was too much like a fable with a moral. "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" was really great. "The Tower of the Demon Doms" was the best story in the issue.

LOUIS E. FILOSA
Ozone Park, N.Y.

“Why all these bloody pictures? Some blood is essential but why go overboard? Society is violent enough!”

I enjoy reading EERIE and I've gotten some of my friends to read it. They like EERIE too. The art is always outstanding and the stories are usually quite good. So why reduce yourself by running all those bloody pictures? Some blood is of course essential but why go overboard? Our society is violent enough without more. Stick to suspense.

KATHY NORTH
Heber City, Utah

I just picked up EERIE #35. It was really gory and blood-thirsty. In other words—great! Your cover was more than scary. It was eerie. The artwork and stories were great. I've got to hand it to you, EERIE. For a while, I thought CREEPY had you beaten but you've come back and now you and CREEPY are tied. Your covers have really improved.

BARRY KOLEDUK
Pearl River, N.J.



A flashback sequence from Bill DuBay's "Like Cats and Dogs" (EERIE #35). Readers David Warren and Jim Dye claim the story scared them silly while Steve Casaw (see p. 4) said it left him shrieking with laughter rather than terror.

"Like Cats and Dogs" in EERIE #35 gave us the creeps and made us feel a little eerie.

DAVID WARREN
JIM DYE
Shelby, N.C.

I buy your magazine every time it comes out. I enjoyed all the stories in EERIE #34 but you need more monsters!

DAVID STARR
Mystic, Conn.

The best EERIE I have ever read was EERIE #35. It had the best art and stories ever. My favorite was "Like Cats and Dogs!" Thanks for the werewolf story. Cuz. I never get my fill of werewolf and vampire stories so turn out more. Run more stories like "I, Werewolf" from EERIE #30. Best artist of the issue has to go to Sanho Kim. EERIE #35 was jammed with sword and sorcery stories which is good but don't print all sword and sorcery. Readers get sort of bored with them and also, they're somewhat confusing. All the cities are mixed up with names like "Ethelgargeleth" or "Gtshk."

RONNIE GRIFFITH
W.H. California

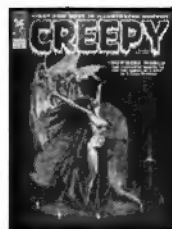


You mean to say you've never heard of "Ethelgargeleth?" It's a mouthwash Ethel uses.

I liked EERIE #35 because of the stories "I Am Dead, Egypt, Dead" and "Like Cats and Dogs!"

JIM BOGEN
St. Paul, Minn.

SUBSCRIBE TO EERIE. WHY TAKE A CHANCE OF MISSING THAT SMILING LITTLE FACE OF EERIE'S? JUST THINK—OUR OWN COUSIN EERIE ACTUALLY DELIVERED TO YOUR DOOR EVERY OTHER MONTH. TEAR OUT THE COUPON NOW & SUBSCRIBE!!



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Cousin EERIE is feverishly at work in his underground lab, preparing all those sinister elements that go into an issue of EERIE. But YOU are the one with the secret formula! The only time EERIE knows what potions best go together is when you write and tell him. Write EERIE and let him know what you think should go into his book to make it better than that creepy Uncle CREEPY's mag! Send your secret formula to:

DEAR COUSIN EERIE
c/o Warren Publishing Co.
145 East 32nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10016

IT STILL EXISTS -- THERE, ON THE OCEAN FLOOR -- THE CONTINENT OF ATLANTIS... AND UPON THIS CONTINENT, THERE STANDS THE HUGE, GLEAMING PALACE OF THE KINGDOM OF MANAI. YOU KNOW WELL THAT THIS KINGDOM EXISTS... FOR YOU ARE PRINCE TARGO, THE SON OF THE MIGHTY KING OF THIS PROUD LAND...

THE OTHER SIDE OF ATLANTIS

FATHER DOES NOT UNDERSTAND WHY I SPEND SO MUCH TIME **AWAY** FROM ATLANTIS... WHY I PREFER TO SPEND MY TIME AMONG THE **SURFACE** PEOPLE!

...NOR DOES HE UNDERSTAND WHY **SO MANY** OF OUR PEOPLE LEAVE MANAI AT AN **EARLY AGE**... TO GO **LIVE** UPON THE SURFACE WORLD!

FATHER IS **TIED** STRONGLY TO THE TRADITIONS OF MANAI. HE HAS STRONG FEELINGS OF **NATIONAL PRIDE**.

HE DOES NOT THINK IT IS **STRANGE** AT ALL THAT WE ARE TIED TO THIS LAND ONLY BY THE **RINGS** THAT WE WEAR!

...FOR IT IS THESE RINGS THAT ALLOW US TO **BREATHE** THE WATERS OF THE SEA!

WITHOUT THESE MYSTICAL RINGS, WE WOULD **DROWN** HERE AS WOULD **ANY** MEN!

MOMENTARILY YOUR MIND DRIFTS BACK... AND YOU REMEMBER THE TALES THAT WERE TOLD TO YOU WHEN YOU WERE YOUNG... TALES OF ATLANTIS WHEN IT TOO WAS YOUNG...

BACK THEN, CENTURIES BEFORE YOUR BIRTH,
ATLANTIS STOOD UPON THE SURFACE, A SURFACE
CONTINENT... AND THE PROUDEST KINGDOM THEREUPON
WAS THE KINGDOM OF MANAI...



BUT THEN, ONE DAY, THERE CAME
THE PROPHECY...

SIRE, I HAVE SPOKEN
TO THE SPIRITS, AND THEY
HAVE TOLD ME THAT IT
IS TRULY **NEAR**.

OUR LAND
WILL SOON SINK
DEEP INTO THE
SEA...



THESE **RINGS**--OUR
PEOPLE MUST ALL
WEAR ONE! THEY
WERE GIVEN UNTO
ME BY **POSEIDON**
HIMSELF! AND THEY
WILL **PROTECT** US!



WHEN THE CONTINENT
SINKS, WE SHALL NOT **DROWN**,
AS WILL THE PEOPLE OF THE
OTHER KINGDOMS OF
ATLANTIS!

AND WHEN THE FATEFUL DAY CAME,
YOUR PEOPLE, ALONE IN ALL
ATLANTIS, WERE **SPARED**...



OUR PEOPLE ARE
STILL BORN AS
AIR- BREATHERS...
BORN AND RAISED
IN AIR-FILLED ROOMS...



...UNTIL IT IS FELT THAT THEY ARE OLD ENOUGH, THEN, THEY ARE SENT OUT AND TAUGHT TO LIVE IN WATER...

NO WONDER SO MANY OF OUR PEOPLE LEAVE MANAI! AND GO TO THE SURFACE! IT IS **UNNATURAL** FOR US TO LIVE HERE BENEATH THE SEA!... FOR WE ARE, IN TRUTH, **AIR-BREATHERS!**

STILL, FATHER REFUSES TO **ACCEPT** THIS FACT! HE CONTINUES TO **CLING** TO THE OLD-FASHIONED TRADITIONS OF MANAI! HE LOVES OUR LAND **SO MUCH** HE REFUSES TO SEE THAT OURS IS A **DYING** KINGDOM!

AS FOR **MYSELF**

THOUGH FATHER FEELS THEY ARE DECADENT, I **MUCH PREFER** THE PLEASURES OF THE SURFACE WORLD... TO THE CONSERVATIVE AND **PRUDISH** WAYS OF MANAI!

BESIDES, I HAVE OF LATE BEEN READING OUR ANCIENT BOOKS OF **PROPHECY!** AND THEY ALL PREDICT A **DARK** AND **DISMAL** FUTURE FOR MANAI!

IT'S AS--

HEY! WAIT A MINUTE!

I'VE BEEN TOO DEEP IN THOUGHT! HAVEN'T BEEN WATCHING WHERE I'VE BEEN **GOING!**

THIS IS THE LAND OF **KARMINE!** A **FOREBODING** AND **DEAD** LAND... I USUALLY SWIM FAR **ABOVE** IT! THIS PLACE TRULY REEKS OF **EVIL!**

YET, THIS IS ALSO A **STRANGE COINCIDENCE!**

...FOR **ALL** THE BOOKS OF PROPHECY **MENTION** THIS LAND!

IT IS **HERE** THEY SAY THAT THE FATE OF MANAI WILL BE DECIDED!



SEEMS **IMPOSSIBLE** THAT THE DESTINY OF MANAII WOULD LIE **HERE**, SO FAR FROM MANAII ITSELF!

AND YET -- **HEY!** WHAT'S GOING ON?



CURRENTS -- PULLING ME TOWARD THAT **PIT!**

TOO STRONG!
CAN'T BREAK **FREE!**



THEN, AS THE **CURRENTS** PUSH YOU DOWN INTO A GREAT, DEEP PIT...

SOME SORT OF **LIGHT SOURCE** DOWN THERE!

BUT... IF THESE **CURRENTS** KEEP PUSHING ME **THIS** HARD, I'LL BE **CRUSHED** WHEN I REACH THE **BOTTOM!**



WEEKS PASS... AND IN MANAII, A YOUNG GIRL-- THE GIRL WHOM YOUR FATHER WISHES YOU WOULD ONE DAY MARRY-- BECOMES WORRIED...

I DON'T **GET** IT!

IT JUST ISN'T **LIKE** TARGO-- TO BE AWAY FROM MANAII FOR **THIS** LONG A PERIOD! NOT WITHOUT TELLING THE QUEEN **WHERE** HE'S OFF TO!

AND SPECIALLY NOT AT A **TIME LIKE THIS**--
WITH THE KING AWAY ON "THE HUNT", AND
THE QUEEN NEEDING TARGO'S **HELP** TO
RUN THE KINGDOM!

SOMETHING
TELLS ME HE
MAY HAVE
GOTTEN
HIMSELF
INTO SOME
SORT OF
TROUBLE...
NEED
HELP!

I'VE GOT
TO TRY'N
FIND HIM!

THE GUARD WHO WAS
STATIONED AT THE NORTH-
WEST TOWER SAID TARGO
TOOK OFF IN **THIS**
DIRECTION!

THERE ARE THE RUINS
OF A COUPLE OF OTHER
KINGDOMS UP AHEAD... AND
THEN, A WAYS BEYOND THAT,
THE **SHORELINE!**

COULD **THAT** BE WHERE HE WAS
HEADED? TOWARD **LAND?**

I **KNOW** HE PREFERS THE
SURFACE WORLD TO MANAI...
BUT STILL, AT A TIME LIKE
THIS, THAT JUST DOESN'T
ADD UP!

STILL, I'VE GOT TO
BEGIN MY SEARCH
SOMEWHERE!

AS SHE CONTINUES ON,
TOWARD THE SURFACE
WORLD... ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF THE
CONTINENT OF
ATLANTIS, THE YOUNG
GIRL COMES UPON
THE LAND OF
KARMINE... AND
QUICKLY PASSES BY,
UNAWARE OF WHAT
HAPPENED HERE
WEEKS EARLIER...

I'LL BE
CRUSHED
WHEN I REACH
THE BOTTOM!



WHA...? COUNTER-CURRENTS-- FROM BELOW--BUCKING ME UP!

THANK GOD! I'M SAVED!



YES... A SOFT LANDING!



BUT NOW WHAT? CAN'T GO BACK THE WAY I GOT HERE! COULDN'T POSSIBLY FIGHT THOSE CURRENTS!

LIGHT SEEMS TO BE COMING FROM SOMEWHERE OVER IN THIS DIRECTION!



THERE'S THE SOURCE! SOME SORT OF FLUORESCENT ROCK!

I WAS HOPEING THE LIGHT WAS FROM THE SUN, SHINING IN FROM SOME OPENING--SO I COULD GET OUT OF THIS HOLE! BUT NO SUCH LUCK!



YOU TOOK A STEP TOWARD THE SHINING ROCK. AND SUDDENTLY, A ROCK BELOW YOUR FOOT GAVE A BIT... WHILE THE ROCK BEFORE YOU BEGAN TO BUZZ...

HUHH? I SEEM TO HAVE TRIGGERED SOMETHING!



THEN THERE CAME A BURST OF INTENSE LIGHT... BLINDING LIGHT... GROWING MORE AND MORE INTENSE...

SOME SORT OF
RADIATION! SO
BRIGHT! CAN'T
SEE A **THING!**
EVERYTHING IS
WHITE!

SOMETHING MUST HAVE
HAPPENED TO MY **EYES!**
CAN'T EVEN SEE MY
OWN BODY!

BUT... BUT I CAN
FEEL SOMETHING
HAPPENING TO IT!

I... I'M **GROWING!**
CHANGING IN **SHAPE!**

AND MY **MIND**...
CAN'T SEEM TO
THINK STRAIGHT...
I'M...

AND NOW... AS THE GIRL FROM MANAI
CONTINUES HER SEARCH FOR YOU...

WELL, THIS IS THE
LARGEST TOWN AROUND
THIS AREA!

SO -- IF HE **CAME**
ASHORE, I SUPPOSE
THERE'S A **FAIRLY**
GOOD CHANCE HE
CAME **HERE!**

BUT, AS SHE LOOKS AROUND...

HMM... DOESN'T SEEM TO BE
ANYTHING IMPORTANT **GOING ON**
AROUND HERE! EXCEPT, MAYBE
FOR THIS **MYSTIC**
WHO'S BEEN SPEAKING
ALL MONTH IN
THE PARK!

ALL THIS MONTH
THOMPKINS
SQUARE PARK

MAHA-SKEET

DOESN'T SEEM
LIKELY THAT TARGO
WOULD COME ALL
THIS WAY JUST TO
LISTEN TO A **SPEECH!**
NOR THAT HE'D
STILL BE
THERE!

STILL, JUST BEFORE HE **LEFT**, I SEEM TO
REMEMBER HIM SAYING **SOMETHING**
ABOUT PROPHECY... AND THE **DESTINY**
OF **MANAI!**

SO MAYBE I'D
BETTER CHECK
THIS OUT-- **JUST**
IN CASE!

WHO **KNOWS?**
MAYBE TARGO'S
BECOME
INFATUATED WITH
THIS GUY-- AND
HAS STAYED TO
LISTEN TO **ALL**
HIS SPEECHES FOR
TWO WEEKS
STRAIGHT!

BUT, WHEN SHE
REACHES THE
PARK...

WOW! FINDING TARGO *HERE*... OR SOME
CLUE AS TO *WHERE* HE IS... IS GOING TO BE
AS HARD AS SEARCHING THE BEACH FOR A
PARTICULAR GRAIN OF SAND!

THIS GUY SURE
MUST BE *POPULAR*!
AND I NEVER EVEN
HEARD OF HIM
BEFORE!

BUT THEN, US FOLKS
BELOW THE SEA AREN'T
OVERLY WELL-INFORMED
ABOUT WHAT GOES ON
UP HERE!

...WHICH I GUESS IS *JUST AS*
WELL--WHAT, WITH ALL THE
DEPRESSING *ECOLOGICAL*
AND *POLITICAL DECAY*
THAT SEEMS TO BE GOING
ON *UP HERE*!

BUT THIS IS
HARDLY THE TIME
TO GET
PHILOSOPHICAL!
I'VE GOT SOMEONE
TO *LOOK* FOR!

HEY,
CHICK

WHY DON'TCHA
COME OVER *HERE*...
AND SIT *WITH ME*?

GET YOUR
HAND OFF
MY ARM,
FELLA!

HEY NOW! THAT'S NO WAY FOR
A *CHICK* TO TALK TO A MAN
LIKE *ME*!

LISTEN, BUD! WHERE
I COME FROM, *MEN* DON'T
PUSH *WOMEN* AROUND!

BUT, SINCE YOU
WON'T RESPOND
TO BEING
ASKED TO
DO SOMETHING...

...I SUPPOSE I'LL JUST HAVE TO USE **FORCE!**

YEEEEEOW!



NMPH! THESE SURFACE-DWELLERS ARE **SOFT!** NOT AT ALL UP TO THE SORT OF EXERCISE **WE** GET EVERYDAY **BENEATH THE SEA!**

THE ONE SHE SEARCHES FOR **NO LONGER EXISTS!** NOT IN HIS **ORIGINAL STATE!**

HE, HE SEEMS TO BE TALKING ABOUT **ME** AND... AND **PRINCE TARGO!** BUT...WHAT'S THIS ABOUT "**NO LONGER EXISTS?**"



ALL THESE PEOPLE ARE LIKE THIS! **SOFT, IMMORAL, STUPID**-- CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT **TARGO SEES** IN THEM... WHY HE LIKES TO HANG AROUND WITH THEM!



YES! IT IS **COMING!** I AM RECEIVING ANOTHER MESSAGE ABOUT ONE OF **YOU...**

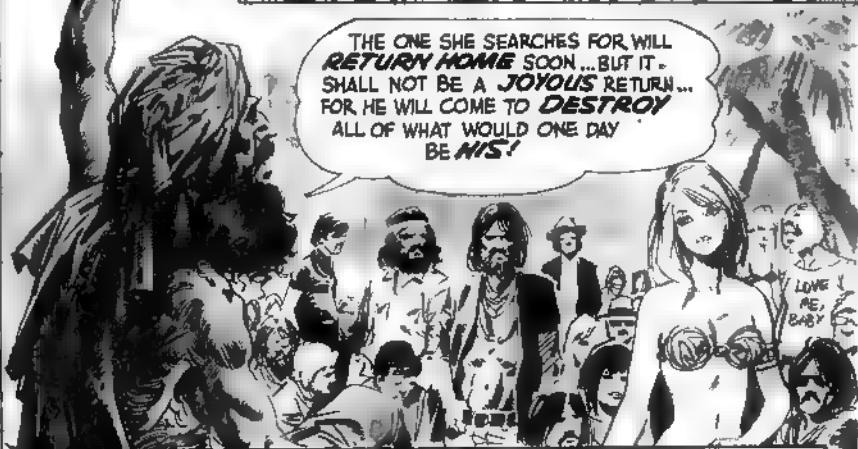
THERE IS ONE AMONG YOU... A YOUNG WOMAN...WHO HAS COME FROM **ANOTHER LAND... A KINGDOM...** COME HERE TO **SEARCH** FOR SOMEONE!

SHE SHOULD **GIVE UP** THE SEARCH... FOR IT WILL BE IN **VAIN!**

WHA..?



THE ONE SHE SEARCHES FOR WILL **RETURN HOME** SOON...BUT IT SHALL NOT BE A **JOYOUS** RETURN... FOR HE WILL COME TO **DESTROY** ALL OF WHAT WOULD ONE DAY BE **HIS!**



AND THERE HAS COME **YET ANOTHER** MESSAGE! THERE IS ANOTHER YOUNG LADY IN OUR AUDIENCE WHO **WONDERS--**

WELL, THAT'S **IT!** HE'S OFF ON ANOTHER TANGENT **NOW!**

THAT SURE WAS WEIRD! WONDER WHAT IT ALL **MEANT!**



I'D CERTAINLY LIKE TO TALK TO HIM ABOUT IT **PERSONALLY!**

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S GOING TO BE **UP THERE-- DOING HIS THING--** FOR QUITE **AWHILE!** AND I'D BETTER BE **LEAVING** SOON!

BESIDES, I HAVE A DISTINCT FEELING THAT THE WHOLE THING WAS A **PUT-ON!** HE WAS **TALKING THROUGH HIS TURBAN!**

WITH AN AUDIENCE **THAT BIG**, THE CHANCES THAT SOMEONE WOULD BE THERE WHO WAS SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE MUST HAVE BEEN **PRETTY GREAT!**

THAT'S WHAT THE WHOLE THING WAS BASED ON-- **PROBABILITY!**

THEN, AFTER AIMLESSLY SEARCHING THE CITY A BIT MORE...

WELL, IT'S GETTING VERY LATE! BETTER HEAD BACK-- **NOW!** TRAVELING THROUGH THE OCEAN WHEN IT'S **DARK** OUT CAN BE QUITE HAZARDOUS!

THIS CERTAINLY HAS BEEN A **BIG WASTE OF TIME!**

AND SO, ONCE AGAIN, SHE SWIMS OVER THE LAND OF KARMINE, NEVER REALIZING HOW CLOSE SHE HAS COME TO YOUR WHEREABOUTS. FOR HER, YOUR FATE REMAINS A MYSTERY...

AND AS SHE CONTINUES ON, SHE DOES NOT NOTICE THE GROUND BELOW HER SHAKE, AS SOME GIANT CREATURE CLIMBS UP TOWARD THE MOUTH OF A GREAT, DEEP PIT... AFTER THE WEEKS OF TRANSFORMATION...



THE CREATURE IS STRONG; THE CURRENTS ARE NO LONGER ANY OBSTACLE, AND WITHIN THE CREATURE'S MIND, ONE TWISTED THOUGHT... ORIGINALLY, IT WAS "MANAI IS DYING"... BUT NOW IT HAS BEEN TWISTED INTO "MANAI MUST DIE"...


THE FUTURE LOOKS ROCKY FOR TARGO AND HIS FRIENDS.





WELCOME, *WELCOME*.
DEAR READER! STEP RIGHT
IN! YOU'RE JUST IN TIME TO
WATCH *ALICE HAMILTON*
SIGN SOME LEGAL DOCUMENTS
TO THE DISMAY OF HER YOUNG
SON, *RANDOLPH*, AND THE
DELIGHT OF HIS NEW STEP-
FATHER, *VINCE CARTER*! SEE
HOW MOUNTING GREED GRIMLY
GROWS INTO...

HORROR at HAMILTON HOUSE



HE'S ALWAYS HATED
ME--ALMOST AS THOUGH HE
SUSPECTED I MARRIED HIS
MOTHER FOR HER DOUGH!
KEEP SCOWLING, FRIEND!
BOTH YOU AND THE OLD
BAG WILL SOON BE OUT
OF MY HAIR *FOREVER*!

VINCE CARTER FIRST CAME TO HAMILTON BAY ON THE RUN! HE OWED BIG MONEY TO THE WRONG PEOPLE! STILL, A FAST BUCK LAND DEAL COULD SAVE HIS HIDE...

BUT HER MAJESTY, THE WIDOW ALICE HAMILTON REFUSED TO SEE A COMMON LAND DEVELOPER! SO VINCE BECAME A VICTIM OF FATE...

MR. CARTER, YOU CAN STAY UNTIL YOUR BOAT IS REPAIRED! BUT THEN I'M SURE YOU'LL WANT TO LEAVE!

YOU'RE MRS. HAMILTON? SUCH A YOUNG WOMAN? I MEAN... THIS ISLAND SAVED MY LIFE! FROM THE STRANGE STORIES IN THE VILLAGE, WELL, I'D EXPECTED SOME SORT OF ECCENTRIC RECLUSE!

SEA PEOPLE ARE SUPERSTITIOUS! THE HAMILTON FAMILY HAS HAD A HISTORY OF VIOLENT DEATHS! ONE NIGHT, SIX YEARS AGO, MY OWN HUSBAND FELL FROM A CLIFF... NO ONE HAS VISITED HERE SINCE THEN!

YET VINCE MOVED IN FAST...

...MANAGING THIS HUGE ESTATE...

...RAISING YOUR SON ALONE...

ALICE... I'VE NEVER MET A WOMAN LIKE YOU...

MY MISTRESS HAS BEEN COLD BUSINESS! NO HOME, NO WARMTH OF FAMILY LOVE! THEN...

...I FOUND YOU...

LET ME PROTECT YOU, DARLING ALICE!... YOU MUST MARRY ME!

SO MAMA'S BOY HATES MY GUTS! RELAX, SONNY, SHE'LL BE ALL YOURS AGAIN!... JUST AS SOON AS THE HAMILTON FORTUNE IS MINE!

AFTER A WEDDING MADE IN...WELL, AFTER A WEDDING...

MADAM, MR. CARTER HAS NOT **FINISHED**, BUT IT WILL BE GETTING **DARK** SOON!

OH, YES! VINCENT, EATON AND HIS WIFE LIVE ON THE **MAINLAND** AND MUST BE ALLOWED TO **RETURN** HOME BEFORE SUNSET! IT WAS ONE OF MY LATE HUSBAND'S **RULES**!

HANG HIS "**RULES**"!... NOW THAT WE'RE MARRIED, YOU CAN MOVE OFF THIS DESOLATE DUMP!

SURELY, ALICE, YOU DON'T WANT TO STAY?

WHAT ABOUT YOU, BOY?

RANDOLPH **WOULDN'T** THINK OF LEAVING! HIS FAMILY TRADITION **FORBIDS** IT! THE FIRST-BORN MALE LIVES HIS **ENTIRE** LIFE IN HAMILTON HOUSE!

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, I HAVE SOME STUDYING TO DO!

YES! IT'S LATE! I'LL SEE YOU TO BED!

THAT'S NOT **NECESSARY** TONIGHT, MOTHER!

SO! EVEN A MAMA'S BOY **REBELS**! THE TURNING OF THAT **WORM** MAY HAND ME THE HAMILTON MONEY AFTER ALL!

THE BOY
SOUNDS **BITTER!**
I KNOW YOU LOVE
THIS ISLAND...

A MAN
WHO STALLS
FOR HIS
LIFE, DIES
SLOWLY...

ALICE, I'M
SICK OF LIVING
ON THIS SEAGULL'S
SANDBOX! **WHY?**
SO THE SACRED HAMIL-
TON PROPERTIES ARE
NEVER OPENED TO
THE PUBLIC! SO...

DEAREST,
THIS CONSTANT
ARGUING IS
DESTROYING
OUR HAPPINESS!...
YOU MUST BE TOLD
THE **TRUTH**...

VINCE ISN'T THE ONLY
ONE WHO LISTENS AS...

IT'S A
FAMILY **SECRET**,
BUT OVER THREE
HUNDRED YEARS
AGO, THIS ISLAND
BECAME A
SANCTUARY FOR
THE HAMILTONS,
WHEN THEY **FLED**
HERE IN **FEAR**
OF...

OH, GOD! IF ONLY
WE COULD LEAVE... I
HATE THIS **LIVING TOMB!**
BUT WE CAN NEVER
LEAVE... **NOT NOW!**

BACK TO
THE HOUSE!

A HUNTER
PROBABLY
POACHING!

BUT **SOMEONE'S**
SHOOTING AT US!

SUDDENLY,
THE SAND AT
THEIR FEET
EXPLODES FROM
THE IMPACT OF
A **BULLET**...

... A WARNING?
MY "**FRIENDS**" WANT
THEIR MONEY **NOW!**

RANDOLPH?! WAS
HE... COULD THAT JELLY-
FISH HAVE **SHOT** AT US?
OKAY, BUDDY! YOU CAN SKULK
IN THE BUSHES! I'M GETTING
OFF THIS ANCESTRAL
GRIEF REEF!



DARK CLOUDS
GATHER THAT
NIGHT

MORE SHERRY, ALICE?
PERHAPS THE BOY WOULD
LIKE SOME? NO? LOOKS LIKE
WE'LL HAVE A FULL MOON
TONIGHT! THE SEA IS RESTLESS
AND VERY ROMANTIC! CARE
TO JOIN ME, DARLING?

A WALK?
OH, YES,
VINCENT!

BUT FIRST, I
MUST SEE RANDOLPH
TO BED!

LET'S GO BACK!

SHIVERING, ALICE? COME OVER HERE!
LOOK AT THAT **SEA**... RAGING, FASCINATING!
COME CLOSER, DARLING! THE ROCKS ARE
SLIPPERY, BUT I'LL HOLD YOU!

GOODBYE,
MY LOVE!
HA HA!

VINCENT,
YOU **DO**
LOVE ME?

GOT TO
SET THE LAUNCH
ADrift! IN THIS
STORM, IT'LL SPLINTER
ON THE ROCKS--A TRAGIC
BOATING MISHAP! EVEN
IF THEY NEVER
RECOVER THE
BODY, I'LL STILL
HAVE THE ESTATE
TO MILK...

DOUBTS,
DARLING?
LET THE SEA
ANSWER YOUR
QUESTIONS! LOOK
CLOSER!

... FOR ALL THOSE
LOVELY **BUCKS** TO GET
OFF THE HOOK AND START
LIVING EASY AGAIN! JUST
AS SOON AS RANDOLPH
JOINS HIS MOTHER IN A
WATERY **GRAVE**, MY
TWO **FLOATING**
ASSETS!

A KEY? ALICE MUST HAVE
LOCKED HIM IN! WHY? SO
WE COULD BE ALONE?

I COULD STILL TAKE THE DOUGH
AND LET THE POOR SLOB LIVE... BUT
HIS ROOM FACES THE CLIFF!

MOANS? YOU
SAW YOUR MOTHER
HILLED? TOO BAD! STOP
THAT WHINING, YOU
COWARD! AT LEAST
DIE LIKE A **MAN!**

SCRATCH! SCRATCH!

UHHUHH!

WH-WHAT? **OH, NO!**
THE MILLER'S DAUGHTER--
SHE **WAS** A WITCH! HER
CURSE TURNED THE
HAMILTONS INTO...

GGGAARRH

...WERE WOLVES!

POOR BOY, BOTH OF THEM
GOING OUT AND DROWN-
ING LIKE THAT!

NO WONDER
THE GRIEVING LAD'S
SELLING HAMILTON HOUSE
AND LEAVING THIS **CURSED**
ISLAND! IT'LL BE THE BEST
THING IN THE WORLD FOR HIM!

AND NOT EVEN
FINDING HIS NEW
DADDY'S BODY!

YEAH, BUT WHAT
ABOUT THE **REST** OF THE
WORLD? OH, WELL. AFTER
BEING CAGED UP ALL THIS
TIME, I GUESS THE LAD
IS ENTITLED TO COME TO
THE CITY FOR A LITTLE
RED-BLOODED FUN, EH,
FELLOW FIENDIES? TOO
BAD IF IT HAPPENS TO
YOUR CITY!

HEH,
HEH!

PROLOGUE

THE SUMMER OF 1943 WAS NOT ONE OF CHARLIE SHORES' BEST SUMMERS, FOR ONE THING, HE FOUND HIMSELF OUT-FITTED IN A FATIGUE UNIFORM IN THE MIST OF A STRANGE LAND WHOSE CULTURES HE COULD NOT FATHOM; AND FOR ANOTHER, THE SHRIEKING BOMBS WHICH TORE THIS LANDSCAPE TO HELL AND BACK, LEFT CHARLIE AND SEVERAL OF HIS COMPANIONS TRAPPED BENEATH THE DEBRIS OF A FALLEN MERCHANT'S SHOP.

CHARLIE WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT SURVIVED THE AIR RAID. HE THOUGHT HE WAS THE LUCKY ONE. IT WASN'T UNTIL YEARS LATER THAT HE REALIZED THAT HE WAS THE UNFORTUNATE.

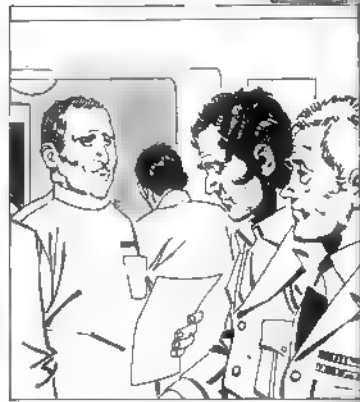
FOR DAYS THERE WAS ONLY THE DARKNESS, FEAR, THE SOUND OF DISTANT BLASTINGS AND THE STENCH OF DEATH. CHARLIE SHORES GROVELLED ABOUT THE MUSTY DIRT CELLAR, CRAWLING OVER THE BODIES OF DECOMPOSING COMRADES, EXISTING ON THE BRINK OF INSANITY. THE CELLAR WALLS SEEMED TO CLOSE IN ON HIM. IN EXTREME MOMENTS OF CLAUSTROPHOBIA, CHARLIE SHORES WOULD HUDDLE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM SHAKING CONVULSIVELY.



IN LATER YEARS HE WOULD BE UNABLE TO RECALL JUST WHEN HE ACTUALLY STARTED FEASTING ON THOSE DEAD BODIES ABOUT HIM JUST TO REMAIN ALIVE. HE CERTAINLY DID NOT THINK OF IT IN TERMS OF CANNIBALISM. HE CERTAINLY DID NOT THINK OF HIMSELF AS A GHOUL. BUT IN HIS EARS, FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE, HE WOULD HEAR THE SHREDDING OF FLESH AND IT WOULD HAUNT HIM THROUGH-OUT THE HOURS OF HIS LONELY EXISTENCE.



WHEN THE ALLIED FORCES RE-OCCUPIED THE SMALL TOWN, THEY DISCOVERED CHARLIE SHORES IN THE RUINS. HE WAS INCOHERENT AND FRIGHTENED OF EVERYONE. THEY AWARDED CHARLIE SHORES SOME MEDALS FOR HIS HARROWING EXPERIENCE AND WONDERED TO THEMSELVES WHAT HAD CAUSED THE GROTESQUE DETERIORATION OF THE MEN TRAPPED IN THAT CELLAR WITH CHARLIE. THEY PROMPTLY SENT HIM OFF TO A REHABILITATION CENTER FOR EMOTIONAL BASKET CASES.



IT WAS THERE THAT CHARLIE REALIZED THE COMPULSION WAS A BASIC PART OF HIM, ONE THAT COULD NOT BE DENIED. A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG THERAPIST HAD FALLEN QUITE UNDER THE SPELL OF THE SHY YOUNG INVALID NAMED CHARLIE SHORES. SHE SPENT EXTRA HOURS TRYING TO COAX HIM FROM HIS SILENT UNIVERSE. CHARLIE FOUND HIMSELF ATTRACTED LIKEWISE, BUT HIS COMPULSION WAS RUNNING RAMPANT. HE BEGAN STALKING NEARBY CEMETERIES WHERE THE VARIOUS DECEASED LIE. THE GIRL DISCOVERED HIS ATROCITIES AND CHARLIE SHORES' THIN LEASE ON LIFE ENDED.



SURVIVAL INSTINCT TOOK OVER. WITHOUT REALIZING IT, HE ENDED THE YOUNG GIRL'S LIFE; YET, WHEN SHE WAS LIMP AT HIS FEET, HE BECAME AWARE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND SHUDDERED DEEP WITHIN. HE HAD KILLED MORE THAN THE GIRL THAT NIGHT. HE HAD KILLED MORE THAN THEIR RELATIONSHIP.



AS HE STAGGERED AWAY INTO THE FOG THAT NIGHT, HE KNEW THAT HE WOULD NEVER BE ABLE TO RETURN TO ANY NORMAL LIFE. HE MADE THAT DISCOVERY IN THE WINTER OF 1945.



POOR CHARLIE SHORES. WE WON'T SEE HIM AGAIN FOR A WHILE BUT WHEN WE DO, IT'LL BE WORTH THE WAIT... FOR HE IS JUST ONE OF...

FEELING BETTER, ANDREW?
I'VE BROUGHT YOU ANOTHER
CUP OF BRANDY, MIGHT
EASE THE PAIN A BIT.

THANK YOU,
MR. BARR.

THE ONES WHO STOLE

IT FROM YOU

IT IS A WARM AUGUST NIGHT. OUTSIDE THE WINDOW PANES, HEAT BUGS RAISE A CHORUS OF NIGHT-TIME SONG. INSIDE, ANDREW PRINE STUDIES HEAVY LEDGERS, HIS EYES TIRED AND BURNING. HE BARELY HEARS THE HEAD BUG'S LAMENT OR THE SOUNDS OF HIS LAWYER, ARNOLD BARR, RE-ENTERING THE STUDY.

IT IS YEARS LATER...
AND ANOTHER EVEN
MORE FEARSOME
HUMAN PARASITE
THAN CHARLIE SHORES
IS ABOUT TO STRIKE.

I'M SURE YOU'LL
FIND EVERYTHING IN
ACCORD. I'VE HANDLED
YOUR ENTERPRISES,
COMPLEX AS THEY ARE
WITH, I THINK JUST THE
RIGHT TOUCH. JUST
ENOUGH SPECULATION.

I WISH I HAD MORE TIME TO
CHECK THESE BALANCE
LISTINGS BEFORE MY SON,
NATHAN, RETURNS FROM THE
WEST COAST. HE'LL
BE HANDLING MANY
OF THESE ACCOUNTS
AFTER HE
ESTABLISHES HIS
OWN LAW PRACTICE
HERE.

I TAKE
IT, YOU FEEL
THERE IS
SOMETHING
WRONG WITH THE
ACCOUNTS,
MR. PRINE?

WE SHALL
SEE. WE
SHALL SEE,
WON'T WE,
MR. BARR?
OH HHH!!!!
THAT PAIN... IT'S
BACK...
SHARPER
NOW!

IT'S THE
BRANDY.

WHAT?

IT'S THE
BRANDY. IT'S
BEEN LACED
WITH RAT
POISON!



THEN YOU
HAVE BEEN
EMBEZZLING
FROM ME,
HAVEN'T YOU,
BARR?

YOU WON'T TELL
ANYBODY ABOUT IT. THAT
POISON IS SPREADING
THROUGH YOUR SYSTEM!
IN MOMENTS, YOU'LL START
TO GAG, YOUR BODY WILL
EXPERIENCE INVOLUNTARY
SPASMS!

NATHAN
WILL FIND
YOU OUT!

NATHAN WILL
NEVER FIND ME OUT,
OLD MAN! IT HAS
BEEN DONE SLOWLY
AND CLEVERLY!

IT WILL APPEAR
THAT YOU MADE SOME
VERY BAD BUSINESS
TRANSACTIONS OVER
THE LAST FEW YEARS.
THAT'S WHY YOU'RE
COMMITTING SUICIDE!

YOU SEE, I HAVE
THE NOTE YOU LEFT THE
LIVING WORLD, TELLING HOW
DESPONDENT YOU ARE ABOUT
ALL THIS. HOW YOU'VE
DECIDED TO END IT ALL SO
THAT NONE WILL KNOW
YOUR FAILURE!

STAY
WHERE YOU
ARE, ANDREW!

LIKE HELL
I WILL!

ARNOLD BARR STARES DOWN AT THE BLOODIED CORPSE. AT FIRST HIS MIND REFUSES TO WORK. IT IS THE FIRST TIME ARNOLD BARR HAS EVER MURDERED ANYONE. IT IS THE FIRST TIME HE HAS SEEN WHAT A BULLET CAN DO TO FLESH.



BARR'S FIRST THOUGHT IS THAT IT HAS STOLEN HIS IDENTITY. ROBBED HIM OF THOSE ARISTOCRATIC FEATURES AND THAT BURNING INTELLECT BEHIND HIS GREY EYES. THE FIRST SHOCK PASSES AS THE OLD MAN'S BLOOD SEEPS INTO THE EXPENSIVE CARPETING.



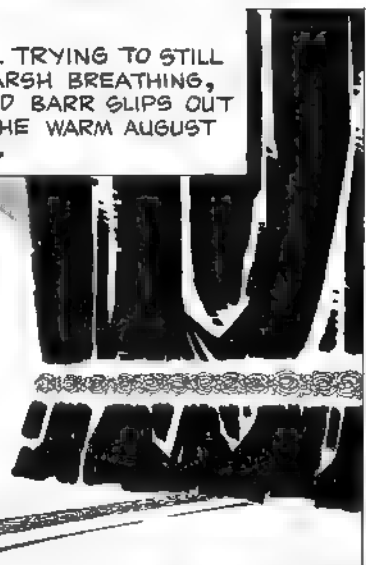
IT CAN STILL BE A SUICIDE, BARR REALIZES. JUST AFTER A FEW OF THE PLANS. HIS ULCERS RIPPING AT HIS INSIDES, BARR KNEELS AND PLACES THE DEATH STIFFENED FINGERS ABOUT THE AUTOMATIC.



THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO IS PLACE THE NOTE. THE MOST LIKELY PLACE UNDER THE LAMP.



STILL TRYING TO STILL HIS HARSH BREATHING, ARNOLD BARR SLIPS OUT INTO THE WARM AUGUST NIGHT.



THE AUGUST AFTERNOON IS HOT AND UNCOMFORTABLE. NATHAN PRINE STANDS BEFORE THE HEAVY METAL CASKET, SUSPENDED ABOVE THE DARK GOUGE OF EARTH.

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD;
I SHALL NOT WANT.

HE STARES WITH SIGHTLESS EYES AT THE FLOWERS THAT ADORN THE CASKET, BUT THE COLOR AND ACCOMPANYING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT CARDS ARE NOT FOR HIS FATHER, HE THINKS BITTERLY. THEY ARE THE PROPER ACTIONS OF FRIENDS AND RELATIVES WHO RARELY SAW ANDREW PRINE DURING HIS DAYS ALIVE.

SO NOW, THEY WEEP WITHOUT EVEN REMEMBERING WHAT HIS FATHER LOOKED LIKE WHEN HIS LUNGS STILL FUNCTIONED AND HIS VOICE WAS CLEAR AND SHARP.

NOW, AS THAT GOUGING WOUND OF EARTH AWAITS THE PRESENCE OF HIS FATHER, THEY HUSTLE OUT ALL THEIR AFFECTIONS AND EMOTIONS. IT IS MORE A FAMILY REUNION THAN AN EPILOGUE TO HIS FATHER'S LIFE.

AND THEY ALL BELIEVE THE OLD MAN WITH THE INDOMINATABLE WILL SHOT HIS BRAINS OUT! THE MINISTER'S WORDS HANG SOLEMNLY OVER THE PEOPLE GATHERED ABOUT THE LAST SPECTACLE OF MORTAL LIFE. NATHAN WONDERS JUST WHAT ALL THOSE FLOWERY VERSES HAVE TO DO WITH HIS FATHER.

THERE IS ONLY ONE THING THAT MATTERS; FINDING THE MAN WHO MURDERED HIS FATHER!

HE MAKETH ME TO LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES.

HE LEADETH ME BESIDE THE STILL WATERS...

YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH...

THE EMPTY ROOMS BRING BACK CHILDHOOD MEMORIES, MEMORIES THAT BLEND INTO A SEGMENT OF HIS PAST.



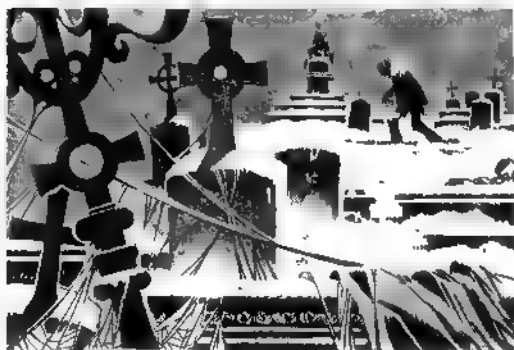
DETERMINATION LEADS HIM THROUGH THE SILENT ROOMS.



A GRIM FEELING OF VENGEANCE CROWDS OUT THOUGHTS OF AMANDA AS HIS SEARCH CONVINCES HIM FURTHER OF HIS FATHER'S MURDER.



SHADOWS STRETCH ELONGATED FINGERS OVER THE CLOSE-CLIPPED GREEN LAWN. ONE SHADOW MOVES FURTIVELY PAST THE GRANITE TOMBSTONES. IT IS A SHADOW THAT MOVES WITH CUNNING. THIS SHADOW HAS STALKED THE NIGHT-SHROUDED GRAVEYARDS BEFORE. IT HAS HAD TWO DECADES OF PRACTICE.



THE NIGHT IS QUIET AND STILL. THE LIVING PARTICIPATORS OF THE BURIAL RITES HAVE LEFT THE DECEASED TO THEIR DOMAIN. WITH DARKNESS, THE CEMETERY GROUNDS HAVE LOST THEIR LANDSCAPED BEAUTY.



CHAMELEON-LIKE, HE PROGRESSES TO ONE OF THE FRESH GRAVES AND WAITS WITH HUSHED BREATHING FOR LONG MOMENTS BEFORE HE BEGINS HIS TASK. CHARLIE SHORES, THOUGH HE BARELY REMEMBERS THAT NAME, NO LONGER CURSES HIS AFFLICTION. HE CAN ONLY DIMLY RECALL HOW THE NIGHTMARE BEGAN AND ONLY ONCE IN A VERY LONG WHILE DOES HE REMEMBER A SOFT WOMAN WHO MIGHT HAVE GIVEN HIM SALVATION. ON THOSE NIGHTS HE WISHES HE COULD LEARN HOW TO WEEP ONCE AGAIN ...



AMANDA VINCENT IS WARM AND SOFT BESIDE HIM. NATHAN FEELS A QUIET REASSURANCE AT HER PRESENCE, BUT IT DOES NOT ALTER THE TURMOIL OF DISCOVERIES HE HAS MADE THAT DAY.

PLEASE
GIVE IT UP,
NATHAN!

HOW CAN YOU
TALK THAT WAY,
AMANDA! THEY STOLE
HIS LIFE!

YOU DON'T
HAVE ANY
REASON TO
SUSPECT
THAT.

YES, I DO, AMANDA!
I'M GOING TO HAVE HIS
BODY EXHUMED AND
HAVE AN EXHAUSTIVE
AUTOPSY DONE. THEY
WON'T GET AWAY WITH
STEALING HIS LIFE!

I DON'T BLAME
YOU FOR THAT, NATHAN!
IT'S JUST I'M AFRAID
OF WHAT YOU'RE LOSING!
YOU LET PEOPLE STEAL
PARTS OF **YOUR**
LIFE EVERYDAY
YOU'RE ALIVE, NATHAN!
ARE YOU BLIND
TO THAT?

AMANDA,
AT THIS MOMENT
I DON'T REALLY
CARE ABOUT
THEOLOGY.

NOT THEOLOGY,
NATHAN! BUT
YOU'RE LIFE
AND THE ONES WHO
ARE STEALING IT
FROM YOU!

THE POLITICAL
LEGISLATORS YOU
AND THE REST OF
THIS SOCIETY HAVE
LET RUN AMOK--
THEY'RE **BUILDING**
TINIER AND TINIER
CAGES OF FREEDOM
FOR YOU TO EXIST IN!
YOU'RE SUCH AN
ADVANCED MAN,
NATHAN, YOU WOULDN'T
EVEN THINK OF A
BOSTON TEA PARTY,
THOUGH THEY CLIP
YOU TIME AND AGAIN
WITH MORE AND
MORE TAXATION!

NATHAN PRINE, THE BRILLIANT LAWYER! BIG
BROTHER ASKS YOU TO SPECULATE ON HOW
MUCH CAPITAL YOU WILL EARN WITHIN THE
NEXT YEAR! OR THE
BANKS--WHICH POLITELY
COMPUTERIZE YOU!
WITHIN FIVE TO TEN
YEARS YOU'LL NO LONGER
HAVE ANY NEED OF
CASH TRANSACTIONS,
THEY'LL GIVE YOU
ONE **TINY CHARGE**
CARD THAT'LL HAVE
YOUR SYMBOLS AND
RESPONSIBILITY ALL
STAMPED ON ITS
PLASTIC
SURFACE!

COOL IT,
AMANDA!

DON'T YOU
SEE, NATHAN? I
JUST DON'T WANT
THEM STEALING
ANOTHER PART
OF YOU!

AMANDA VINCENT'S VOICE FALLS ON DEAF EARS. NATHAN PRINE DISPLAYS THE TALENTS OF A SUPERIOR COUNSELOR OF THE LAW: CAJOLLING, BADGERING, DEMANDING, SUBTLY BRIBING UNTIL HIS GOAL IS ACCOMPLISHED. AMANDA WATCHES FROM THE DISTANCE AS THE TINY GROUP WITNESSES THE COFFIN'S RESURRECTION.



YOU CAN'T BRING HIM BACK! AMANDA YEAHS PLEADING WITH NATHAN'S GRIM VISAGE-- NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU DIG HIM UP, NATHAN, YOU CANNOT BRING HIM BACK!



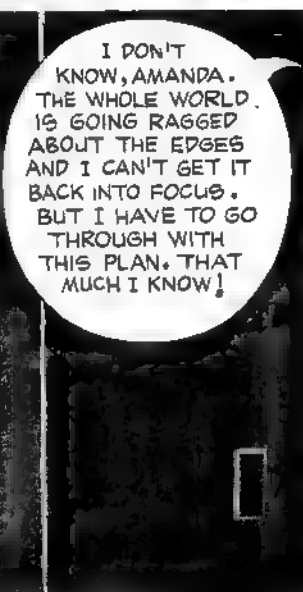
SHE WATCHES HIS FACE AS THE COFFIN LID IS PRIED LOOSE AND WONDERES HOW HE HAS LOST THE PERSPECTIVE HE ONCE HAD.



SHE SEES SHOCK AND INCOMPREHENSION DISTORT HER HUSBAND'S FACE. HURRYING FORWARD, SHE SEES THE OPEN COFFIN AND HORROR SHAKES HER TOTAL BEING!



THE HOTEL ROOM SEEMS VERY SMALL TO AMANDA. JUST THE DAY BEFORE IT HAD SEEMED IMMENSE AND LUXURIOUS. TODAY, THE WALLS SEEM TO PRESS IN. SHE WATCHES NATHAN BECOME A SILENT STRANGER, ONE SHE CAN NO LONGER TOUCH.



NATHAN POSITIONS HIMSELF AT A POINT WHERE HE CAN VIEW HIS FATHER'S GRAVE. CAREFULLY HE SPENDS LONG, MUGGY MOMENTS RECOUNTING THE STEPS IN HIS PLAN: THE LABEL OF THE RAT POISON, THE UNSIGNED LETTER, THE HINTED MOTIVATION HE GAINED FROM EXAMINATION OF COUNTLESS LEDGERS. WOULD THEY LURE BARR TO THE CEMETERY? AT ODD MOMENTS, WHEN HATE IS NOT ENOUGH, HE SEES BRIEF FLASHES OF AMANDA, HER DISTURBED FACE SAYING OVER AND OVER AGAIN, "DON'T LET THEM TAKE IT FROM YOU!"



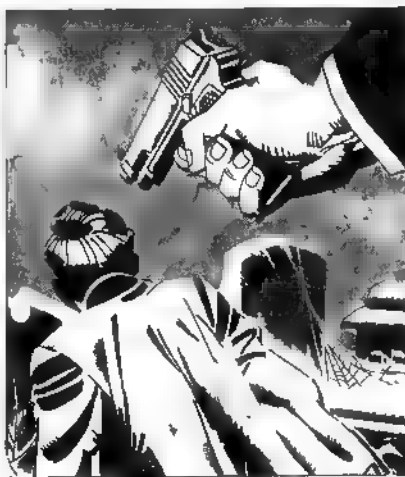
ARNOLD BARR STARES AT NATHAN'S CROUCHED FIGURE. "SO, NATHAN, I OUT-MANUEVERED YOU! ARRIVED EARLIER THAN YOU WANTED! HID THE CAR!" BARR WISHES HE'D TAKEN ANOTHER PILL FOR HIS ULCERS. GAZING DOWN THE DARKENED CEMETERY AND ANDREW PRINE'S SON, BARR REMEMBERS WHAT THE LAST VICTIM LOOKED LIKE WHEN HE PULLED THE TRIGGER. IT'S TOO LATE, ARNOLD! YOU'VE GOT TO KILL HIM! HE KNOWS!



YET THERE IS ONE OTHER PARTICIPANT IN THE DRAMA THIS NIGHT, AND HE IS MUCH MORE SECURE IN THESE SHADOW-SHROUDED SURROUNDINGS. CHARLIE SHORES WATCHES BOTH OF THE FIGURES THROUGH HIS PAIN. IT IS A PAIN HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND. IT COMES FROM WITHIN. AND NOW THESE TWO INTRUDERS STALKING ABOUT THE TOMBSTONES.



GRAVESIDE SURVEILLANCE. STANDING GUARD OVER HIS FATHER'S FINAL RESTING PLACE. HE RECALLS ANOTHER SUMMER NIGHT, YEARS PAST, HIS FATHER GAZING AT HIM--FINALLY SEEING HIM AS A SEPARATE ENTITY, AS NATHAN PRINE, NOT MERELY AN EXTENSION OF ANDREW PRINE. AND THEN AMANDA'S WORDS RETURN, ONLY TO BE INTERRUPTED BY THE DULL CLICK OF A GUN HAMMER BEING COCKED.



NATHAN FLEES, INTENDING TO TAKE A PLACE OF REFUGE WHERE HE CAN DRAW HIS OWN WEAPON. BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT HE INTENDED ALL ALONG. TO KILL ARNOLD FOR WHAT WAS DONE! WITH THAT THOUGHT, NATHAN COLLIDES HEAVILY WITH THE NEW ADDITION TO THE CAST, AND THE WORLD SEEMS TO LOSE SANITY!





WHAT'S...
WHAT'S DOING
THIS TO ME?
WHAT'S HAPPENING
TO ME?

NATHAN'S MIND IS NUMB. HE FORCES HIS LIPS TO
MOVE, TO SPEAK THE WORDS.



THE BULLET SPINS NATHAN ABOUT VIOLENTLY.
AS HE HITS THE GROUND, NATHAN HEARS THE
PISTOL'S RETORT AND RECALLS AN OLD ARMY
ADAGE: "IF YOU HEAR THE SHOT, YOU KNOW
YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!"



AS THE PAIN PIERCES HIS CONSCIOUS,
NATHAN AIMS HIS OWN WEAPON AT
ARNOLD. HE KNOWS HE CANNOT MISS,
BUT HIS FINGER STALLS ON THE CURVE
OF THE TRIGGER.

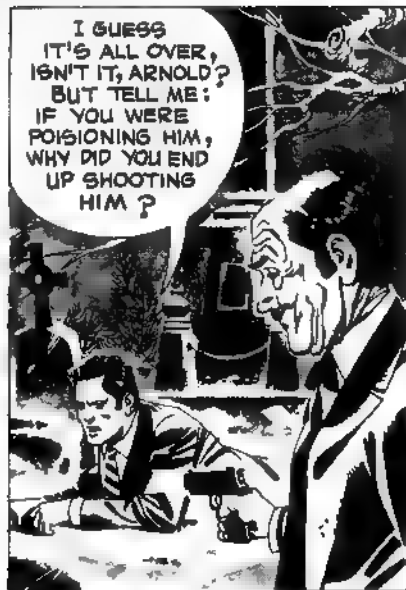


FRAGMENTS OF AMANDA'S STATEMENTS
ARE LOUD IN HIS EARS: "THE ONES WHO
STOLE IT FROM YOU... DON'T LET THEM
STEAL ANY MORE OF YOU!"



HE HAS HESITATED TOO LONG. ARNOLD
FIRES NERVOUSLY AND THAT IS
PERHAPS THE ONLY REASON THAT THE
SHOT IS NOT NATHAN'S DEATH KNEEL.





I GUESS
IT'S ALL OVER,
ISN'T IT, ARNOLD?
BUT TELL ME:
IF YOU WERE
POISONING HIM,
WHY DID YOU END
UP SHOOTING
HIM?



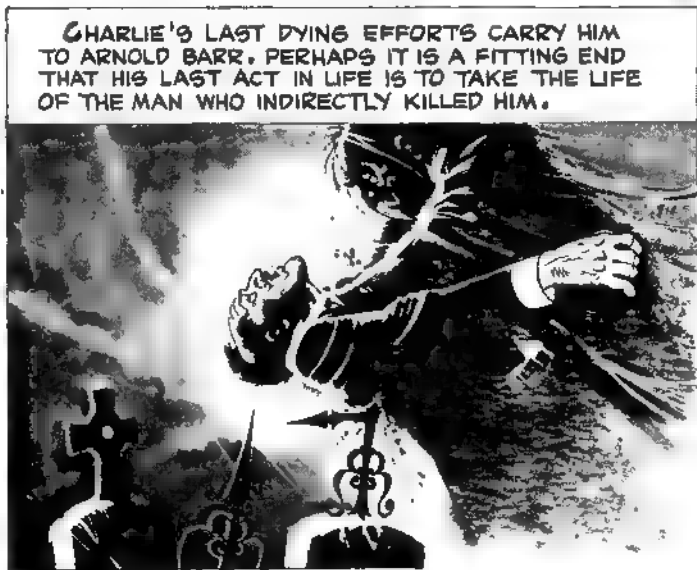
FIRST YOU,
THEN THIS
NEWCOMER.
THEN IT'S ALL
OVER.

CHARLIE SHORES IS ONLY
DIMLY AWARE OF WHAT IS BEING
SAID. THE NAUSEA IS MORE INTENSE
NOW. HOW CAN HE KNOW THAT THE
RAT POISON WHICH HAD BEEN
ADMINISTERED TO ANDREW PRINE
NOW FLOWS THROUGH HIS OWN SYSTEM?

HOW CAN HE KNOW THE
GUNSHOT VICTIM WAS ALSO
VICTIM TO A DEADLY POISON
OR THAT HE IS NOW DYING OF
ACUTE FOOD POISONING?
THE TORMENT OF CHARLIE
SHORES IS FINALLY ENDING.



WHAT IN
GOD'S NAME
IS THAT
THING?



CHARLIE'S LAST DYING EFFORTS CARRY HIM
TO ARNOLD BARR. PERHAPS IT IS A FITTING END
THAT HIS LAST ACT IN LIFE IS TO TAKE THE LIFE
OF THE MAN WHO INDIRECTLY KILLED HIM.

NATHAN CLOSES HIS EYES ON THE
CARNAGE AND LIES IN THE MIDST OF THE
CEMETERY UNTIL THE DAWN LIGHT
REVEALS HIM TO A PAIR OF CARETAKERS
ARRIVING EARLY TO BEGIN THEIR WAY.
HE FEELS IMMENSELY PLEASED WITH
HIMSELF THROUGH THE PAIN, ALMOST
GIDDY.



HE CANNOT WAIT TO SEE AMANDA AGAIN
AND TELL HER THAT THEY DID NOT STEAL
ANYMORE FROM HIM AND THAT HE IS NOW
AWARE WHO THE REAL ENEMY IS.

END



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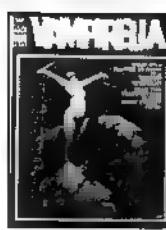
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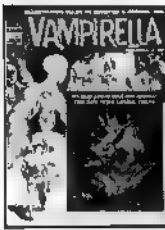
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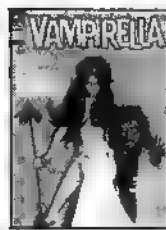
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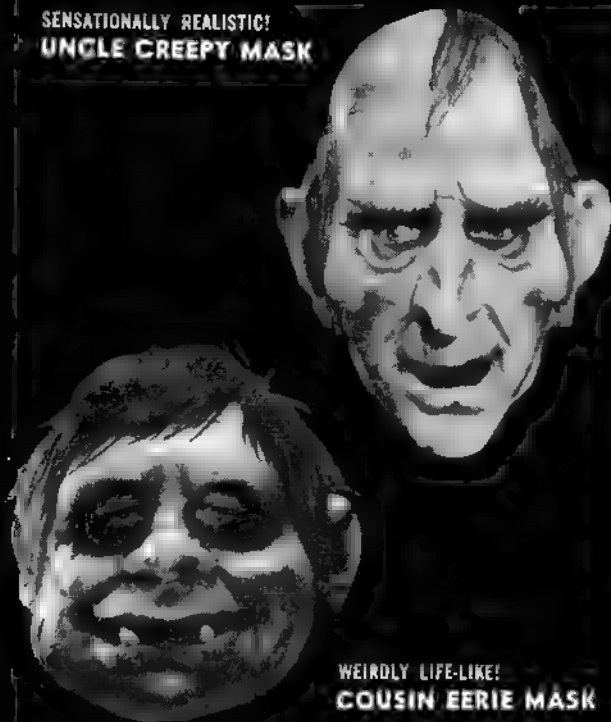
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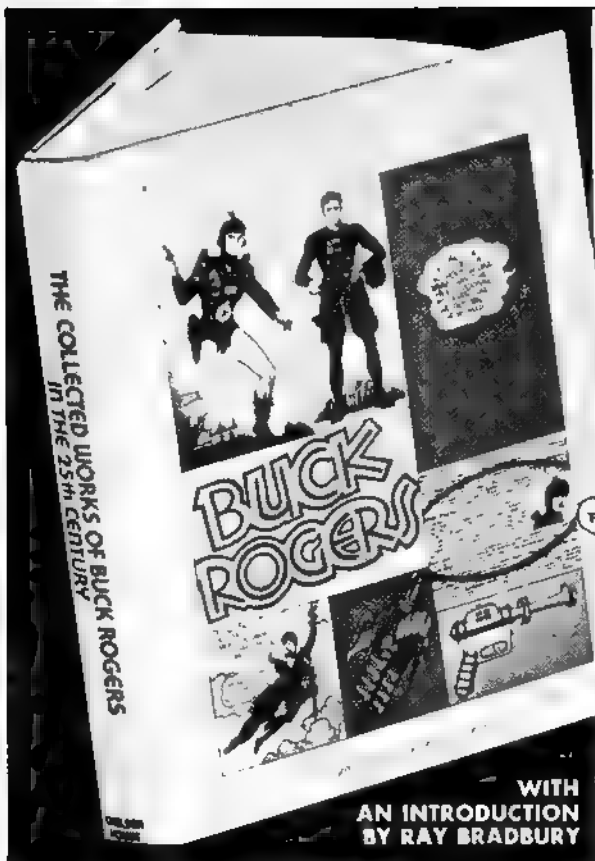
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FOR ME, BUCK

AND THEN, BABY
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DID BEFORE-INTO OUTER
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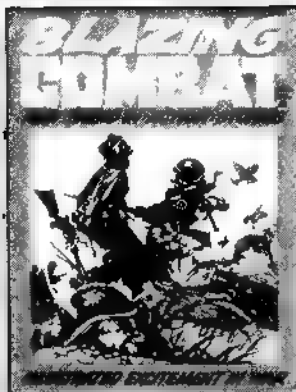
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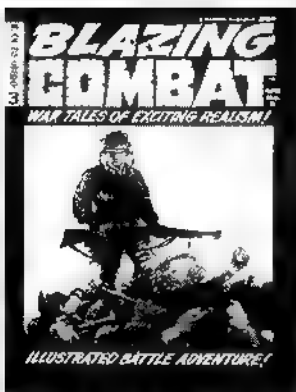
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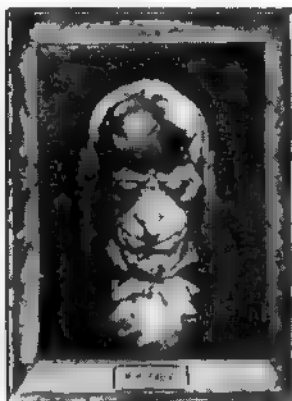
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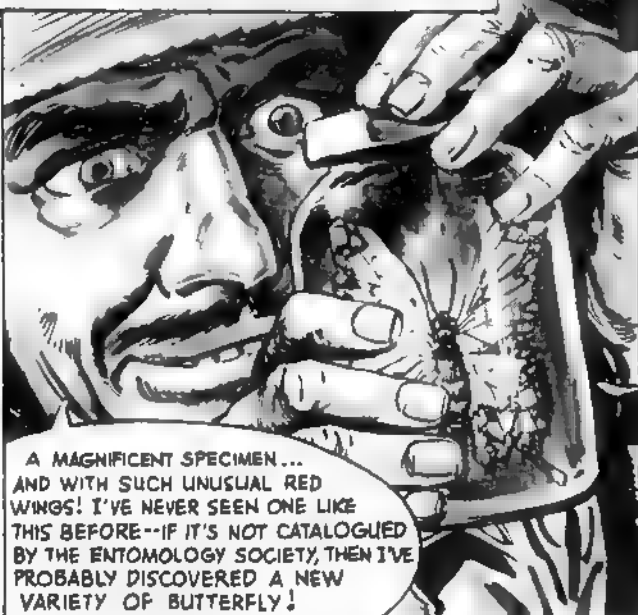
GREETINGS,
BUG-LOVERS!
HERE'S A THRILLER
THAT'LL HAVE
ALL YOU COUSINS
A-BUZZIN'
WITH TERRIFIED
GLEE! I CALL IT...

A RUSH OF WINGS

HARRY EVANS WAS AN ENTOMOLOGIST... AN INSECT SPECIALIST...
AND IN THE REMOTE JUNGLES OF BURMA, HE WAS HAVING A FIELD DAY...

AH, GOT HIM!
AND A BEAUTY,
TOO--THAT MAKES
MY THIRD
BUTTERFLY
TODAY!

GENTLY HE OPENED ONE OF HIS SPECIMEN
BOTTLES AND SLIPPED HIS NEW CAPTIVE INSIDE...



A MAGNIFICENT SPECIMEN...
AND WITH SUCH UNUSUAL RED
WINGS! I'VE NEVER SEEN ONE LIKE
THIS BEFORE--IF IT'S NOT CATALOGUED
BY THE ENTOMOLOGY SOCIETY, THEN I'VE
PROBABLY DISCOVERED A NEW
VARIETY OF BUTTERFLY!

THE THOUGHT OF
FINDING A NEW VARIETY
INTRIGUED AND
EXCITED HARRY... HE'D
WANTED RECOGNITION
IN THE ENTOMOLOGY
SOCIETY FOR A LONG
TIME, WANTED TO BE
MORE THAN JUST
ANOTHER MEMBER...
AND NOW... NOW...

WHY,
THEY MIGHT EVEN
NAME THIS NEW VARIETY
OF BUTTERFLY AFTER ME! I'D
BE ONE OF THE BIG MEN IN THE
SOCIETY, INSTEAD OF A NOBODY!
BUT I MUST SEARCH FURTHER, TO
SEE IF I CAN FIND ANY MORE
BUTTERFLYS LIKE HIM! THE
MORE I HAVE, THE BETTER IT
WILL DOCUMENT MY DISCOVERY AND
PROVE THAT THIS ONE BUTTERFLY IS NOT
JUST A FREAK CHANCE OF NATURE!



THE REST OF THAT AFTERNOON, HARRY WANDERED THROUGH THE JUNGLES, SEARCHING FOR MORE OF THE ELUSIVE NEW BUTTERFLY...

MAYBE THIS ONE IS A FREAK OF NATURE... MAYBE THERE ARE NO MORE TO--WAIT! THERE'S ANOTHER ONE!

CAUTIOUSLY HE CREEPT FORWARD, HIS ARM TENSED... THEN HE LUNGED, HIS NET SWOOPING DOWN!

BLAST IT-- I MISSED!

HARRY PLUNGED THROUGH THE THICK JUNGLE, BRUSHING ASIDE THE ROUGH VINES THAT CLUNG TO HIM...

GOTTA KEEP HIM IN SIGHT-- CAN'T LET HIM GET AWAY--!

ON AND ON HE RACED, NEEDLESS OF EVERYTHING EXCEPT HIS QUARRY...

YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME, MY LITTLE BEAUTY-- I NEED YOU! YOU'RE GOING TO HELP MAKE ME FAMOUS! I--OOPS!

THEN, AS HARRY LOOKED UP, HIS EYES WIDENED IN SURPRISE AT THE SIGHT BEFORE HIM...

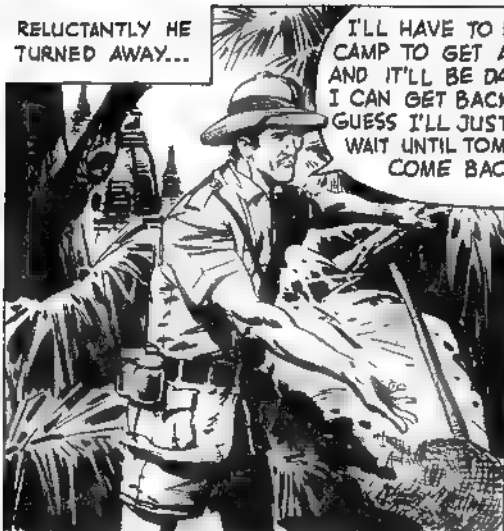
GREAT GUNS-- A LOST CITY, HIDDEN AWAY IN THE JUNGLE--!

AND RED-WINGED BUTTERFLIES... THE CITY IS FULL OF THEM! THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF THEM-- IT'S FANTASTIC!

NUMBED, BY THE DISCOVERY, HARRY SLOWLY GOT TO HIS FEET...

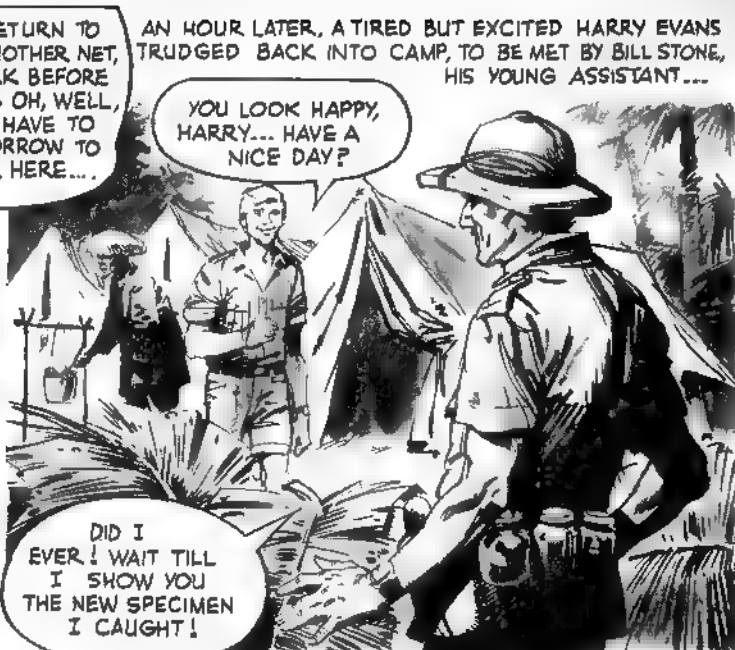
THIS WILL BE LIKE TAKING CANDY FROM A BABY! I CAN CATCH ALL THE BUTTERFLIES I WANT! IF-- EH? MY NET... MUST HAVE BROKEN WHEN I FELL...

RELUCTANTLY HE
TURNED AWAY...



I'LL HAVE TO RETURN TO
CAMP TO GET ANOTHER NET,
AND IT'LL BE DARK BEFORE
I CAN GET BACK! OH, WELL,
GUESS I'LL JUST HAVE TO
WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW TO
COME BACK HERE....

AN HOUR LATER, A TIRED BUT EXCITED HARRY EVANS
TRUDGED BACK INTO CAMP, TO BE MET BY BILL STONE,
HIS YOUNG ASSISTANT....



YOU LOOK HAPPY,
HARRY... HAVE A
NICE DAY?

DID I
EVER! WAIT TILL
I SHOW YOU
THE NEW SPECIMEN
I CAUGHT!

IT'S A RED-
WINGED BUTTERFLY
EVER SEEN
ANYTHING LIKE
IT BEFORE?

NO!--THAT'S A
GREAT CATCH, HARRY!
I THINK IT'S AN ENTIRELY
NEW VARIETY OF
BUTTERFLY! BUT DID
YOU FIND ONLY ONE?



I ONLY CAUGHT ONE, BUT I SAW
LOTS MORE. I FOUND SOME ANCIENT
RUINS IN THE JUNGLE, AND THERE
ARE **HUNDREDS** OF THESE
RED BEAUTIES THERE! IN THE
MORNING, I'LL GO BACK AND
CAPTURE MORE SPECIMENS
TO DOCUMENT MY
DISCOVERY!



NO!
YOU MUST
NOT!

STARTLED, HARRY TURNED TO FACE LING HO,
THEIR NATIVE COOK...



EH?
WHAT
DID YOU
SAY?

YOU MUST NOT GO INTO THE
RUINS, MR. HARRY-- IT IS A PLACE
OF DEATH! MY PEOPLE AVOID
IT, BECAUSE ALL WHO GO
THERE, NEVER RETURN!

OH COME NOW, LING HO--
THAT'S JUST SUPERSTITION...
PURE HOGWASH! YOU DON'T
EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE
IT?

BUT IT IS
TRUE, MR. HARRY!
ANCIENT LEGENDS SAY
RUINS ARE GUARDED BY
A SPIRIT OF EVIL,
THAT KEEPS ALL MEN
AWAY! YOU MUST
NOT GO THERE!



AS LING HO RETURNED TO HIS CHORES,
BILL LAUGHED...

DON'T LISTEN TO
HIM, HARRY--
TOMORROW I'LL GO
WITH YOU, AND
WE'LL CATCH AS
MANY BUTTERFLIES
AS WE CAN!

UH... YEAH,
SURE, BILL. LET'S
EAT NOW--I WANT TO
TURN IN EARLY, SO AS
TO GET A GOOD
START IN THE
MORNING...

THAT NIGHT, HARRY
LAY IN HIS TENT, HIS
MIND ALIVE WITH THE
DAY'S EVENTS...

BILL IS MISTAKEN
IF HE THINKS I'M GOING
TO TAKE **HIM** TO WHERE THE
BUTTERFLIES ARE! HE WANTS
TO SHARE IN THE GLORY, BUT
IT'S **MY** DISCOVERY, AND I
DESERVE **ALL** THE CREDIT!

I'LL SLIP AWAY IN
THE MORNING, BEFORE
HE'S AWAKE, AND
THERE'LL BE NO WAY HE
CAN FOLLOW ME TO THE
RUINS... THAT'LL ASSURE
ME OF GETTING **ALL**
THE BUTTERFLIES AND
ALL THE CREDIT FOR
THE NEW SPECIMEN...

THE HOURS PASSED,
AND FINALLY, HARRY
SLEPT... BUT IT WAS A
RESTLESS, TROUBLED
SLEEP, FULL OF
DREAMS AND DARK
FORBODINGS...

BUTTERFLY...
NO... NO...
KEEP AWAY...
PLEASE...!

FINALLY, DAWN CAME
AND HARRY AWOKE...

WOW, WHAT
A NIGHTMARE!
GUESS I'M JUST TOO
EXCITED OVER THIS
NEW BUTTERFLY!
OH, WELL, I'D
BETTER SLIP OUT
OF CAMP
BEFORE BILL
GETS--EH?

THE SPECIMEN BOTTLE...
IT'S BEEN OPENED! MY
REDWING BUTTERFLY IS
GONE! BUT... BUT WHO
WOULD--?

SUDDENLY THE FLAP OF HIS TENT OPENED AND THE ANSWER TO HARRY'S QUESTION WAS OBVIOUS...

MORNING, HARRY-- I SEE YOU'RE UP EARLY. LING HO HAS BREAKFAST--UNNN!

YOU YOUNG SNEAK! I'LL TEACH YOU!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU? WHY DID YOU HIT ME?

YOU FREED MY SPECIMEN BUTTERFLY IN THE NIGHT, BECAUSE WANTED TO SHARE IN MY DISCOVERY! WELL, IT WON'T WORK... THE CREDIT FOR THE REDWING BUTTERFLY IS ALL MINE!

YOU'RE CRAZY... I DIDN'T FREE... UNGGGHH!

DON'T TRY TO LIE YOUR WAY OUT OF IT, SCUM!

BILL FELL AGAIN, BUT THIS TIME HE DID NOT MOVE...

THROW SOME WATER ON HIM, LING HO-- WAKE HIM UP AND THEN GET HIS GEAR. I WANT HIM OUT OF MY CAMP IN FIVE MINUTES!

I AM AFRAID HE IS GOING NOWHERE. MR. BILL IS DEAD...

WHAT? HE CAN'T BE!

HE SMASHED HIS SKULL ON A ROCK WHEN HE FELL... HE IS DEAD...

BUT... BUT IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! YOU SAW IT, LING HO. YOU ARE MY WITNESS THAT IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! PUT HIS BODY ON ONE OF THE MULES. AS SOON AS I RETURN FROM THE RUINS, WE'LL TAKE HIS BODY BACK TO YOUR VILLAGE...

SO-- YOU ARE GOING TO THE RUINS--EVEN AFTER MY WARNING...

I CAN'T LET YOUR SUPERSTITION ROB ME OF MY DISCOVERY. ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN A NOBODY... BUT THIS NEW BUTTERFLY WILL AT LEAST MAKE ME **SOMEBODY** IN THE SOCIETY! I'LL BE BACK IN A FEW HOURS-- PREPARE EVERYTHING AND WE'LL LEAVE WHEN I RETURN.

MOVING OFF INTO THE JUNGLE, BILL'S DEATH WAS SOON FORGOTTEN, REPLACED BY HARRY'S ONE DRIVING OBSESSION...

MY DISCOVERY WILL EARN ME A POSITION ON THE STAFF OF ANY MUSEUM I CHOOSE! THE SOCIETY'S JOURNAL WILL CARRY PHOTOS AND ARTICLES ABOUT ME AND MY NEW BUTTERFLY...!



AN HOUR LATER...

AH-- HERE WE ARE! BUT... BUT WHERE ARE THE BUTTERFLIES? I DON'T SEE A SINGLE ONE...!



HARRY RUSHED INTO THE ANCIENT CITY, DESPERATE WORDS POURING FROM HIS MOUTH...



NO-- THEY CAN'T ALL HAVE VANISHED! IT CAN'T BE! IT ISN'T FAIR-- IT... HUH? WHAT'S THAT...?



SUDDENLY THERE WERE A THOUSAND BUTTERFLIES AROUND HIM, DIVING AT HIS EYES, BATTERING INTO HIM IN A MADDENED FURY...!

NO--NO! KEEP AWAY... NO... UNN! MY EYES!

DESPERATELY HARRY FLED DOWN THE CRUMBLING STREET OF THE LONG-DEAD CITY WITH THE MASSIVE SWARM OF INSECTS BEHIND HIM!

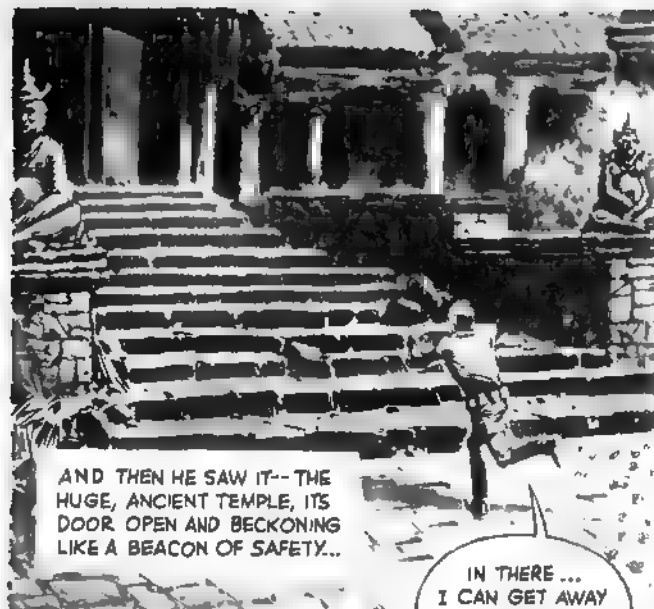
THERE'S NO ESCAPE-- THEY'RE EVERYWHERE! MAYBE I CAN LOSE THEM THIS WAY...!



ON HE RAN, FRANTIC WITH TERROR! DEEPER, INTO THE CRUMBLING RUINS HE WENT... WITH EVERY AVENUE OF ESCAPE BLOCKED BY A LIVING WALL OF INSECTS... ALL, EXCEPT ONE...



THEY-- THEY SEEM TO WANT ME TO GO THIS WAY...



AND THEN HE SAW IT-- THE HUGE, ANCIENT TEMPLE, ITS DOOR OPEN AND BECKONING LIKE A BEACON OF SAFETY...

IN THERE ...
I CAN GET AWAY
FROM THEM
IN THERE--!

AS HE LOOKED ABOUT HIS NEW SURROUNDINGS, TROUBLED THOUGHTS FLOWED THROUGH HARRY'S MIND...

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT-- WHY WOULD THE BUTTERFLIES ALL TURN HOSTILE AND ATTACK IN A MADDENED SWARM LIKE THAT? IT'S AS IF THERE WERE SOME INTELLIGENCE CONTROLLING THEM...

OH WELL,
I CAN HIDE OUT
IN HERE TILL DARK,
AND THEN SLIP OUT
UNNOTICED...

GASPING FOR BREATH, HARRY DUCKED INTO THE MASSIVE STRUCTURE AND SLAMMED ITS STONE DOOR SHUT!

THERE!
THAT SHOULD KEEP
THEM OUT, LONG
ENOUGH FOR ME TO
FIGURE OUT MY
NEXT MOVE...!



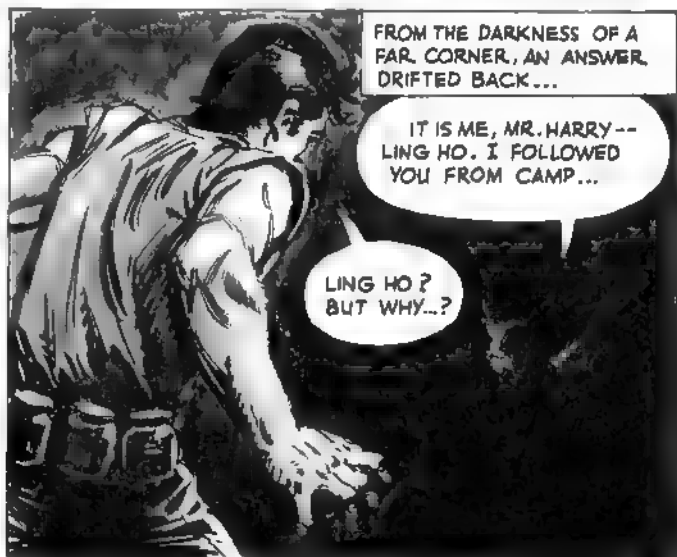
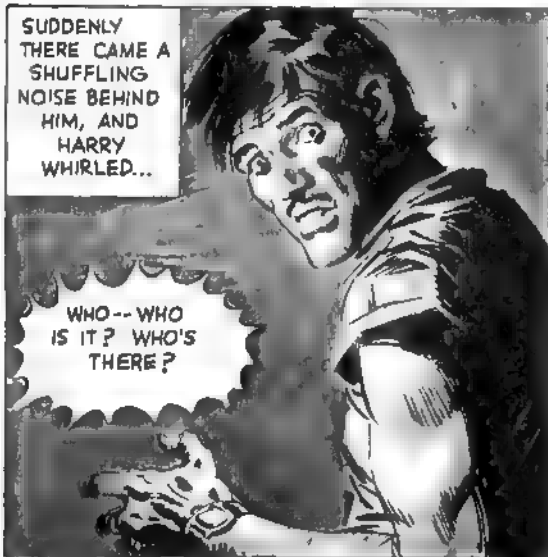
SUDDENLY THERE CAME A SHUFFLING NOISE BEHIND HIM, AND HARRY WHIRLED...

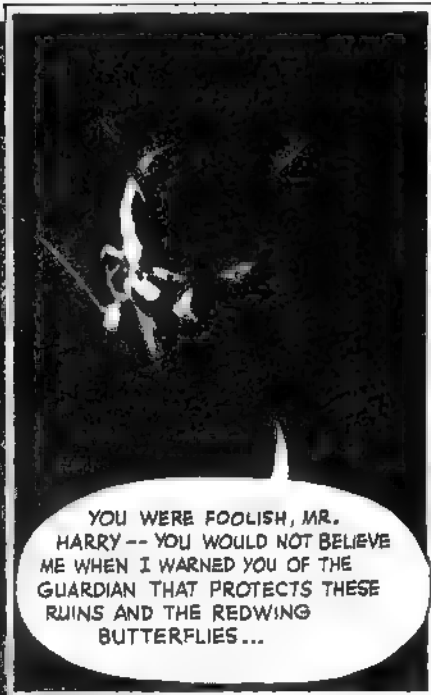
WHO-- WHO
IS IT? WHO'S
THERE?

FROM THE DARKNESS OF A FAR CORNER, AN ANSWER DRIFTED BACK...

IT IS ME, MR. HARRY--
LING HO. I FOLLOWED
YOU FROM CAMP...

LING HO?
BUT WHY...?





YOU WERE FOOLISH, MR. HARRY -- YOU WOULD NOT BELIEVE ME WHEN I WARNED YOU OF THE GUARDIAN THAT PROTECTS THESE RUINS AND THE REDWING BUTTERFLIES...



I COULD NOT ALLOW THAT... I COULD NOT ALLOW YOU TO CATCH MORE OF MY BROTHERS...

YOU HAD TO COME -- HAD TO CAPTURE MORE BUTTERFLIES...

YOUR... WHAT...?

IN THOSE LAST TERRIBLE SECONDS, HARRY SCREAMED IN STARK TERROR AS THE TRUTH DAWNED ON HIM... IT WASN'T BILL WHO'D FREED HIS SPECIMEN BUTTERFLY, BUT LING HO, THE ANCIENT VILLAGER WHOSE SPECIAL INTEREST IN THESE RUINS AND ITS INSECT INHABITANTS WAS NOW OBVIOUS! HARRY SANK TO HIS KNEES, HELPLESS, AS THE BLASPHEMOUS HORROR SPREAD WIDE ITS HUGE, CRIMSON WINGS AND CAME SWOOPING DOWN SLASHING AT HIS THROAT...!



WOW, LEAVES YOU ALL A-FLUTTER DOESN'T IT, GANG? I'VE HEARD OF HAVING BUTTERFLIES IN YOUR STOMACH BUT ONE AT YOUR THROAT IS SOMETHING ELSE, EH, GANG?

THE
END



HERE'S WHERE WE GRAB YOU BY THE

**EERIE
EERIE**

**BACK!
ISSUES!**

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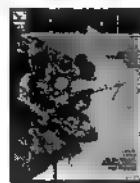
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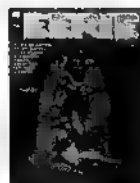
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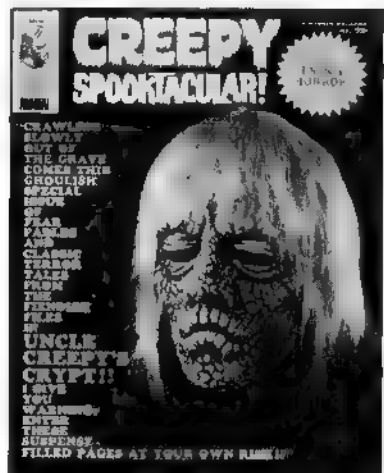
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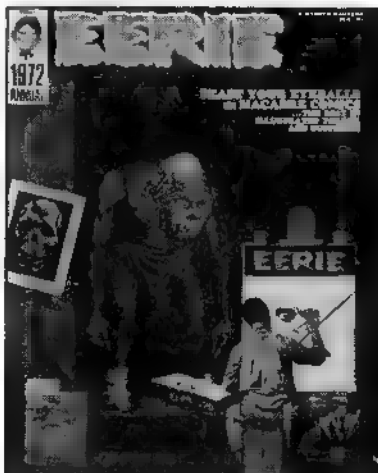
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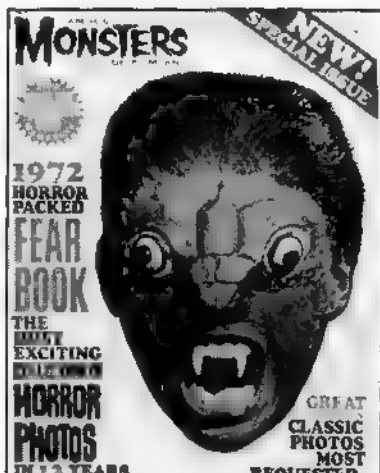
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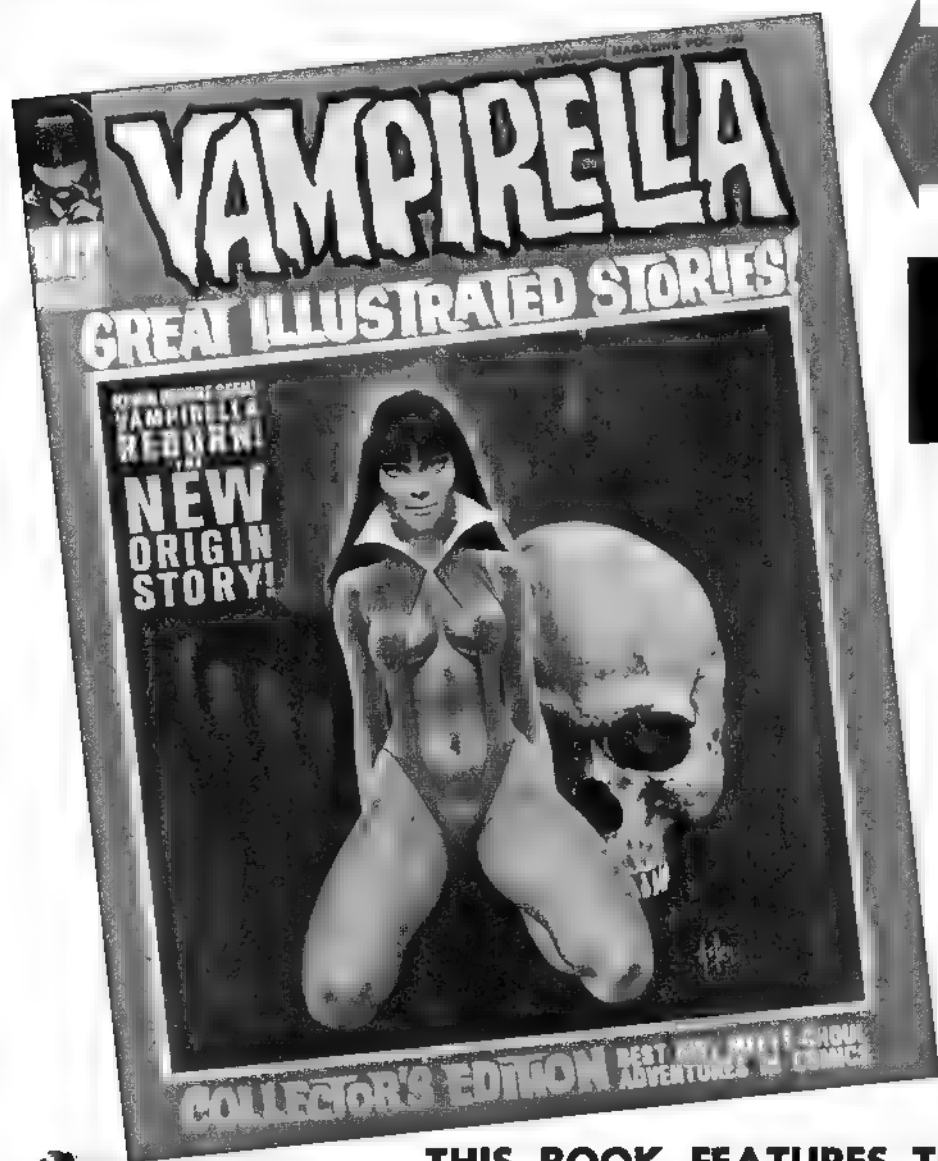
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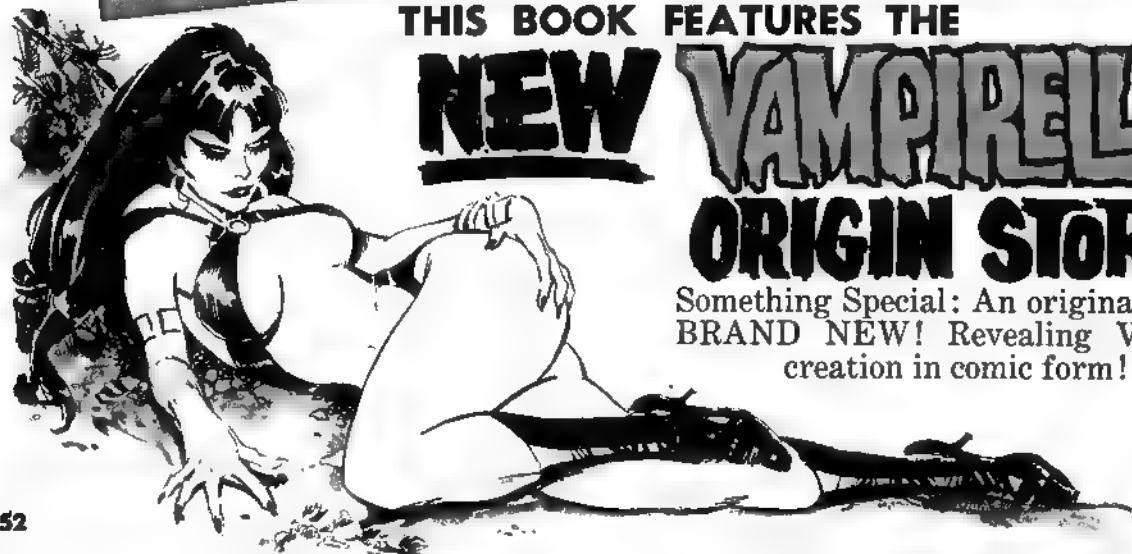
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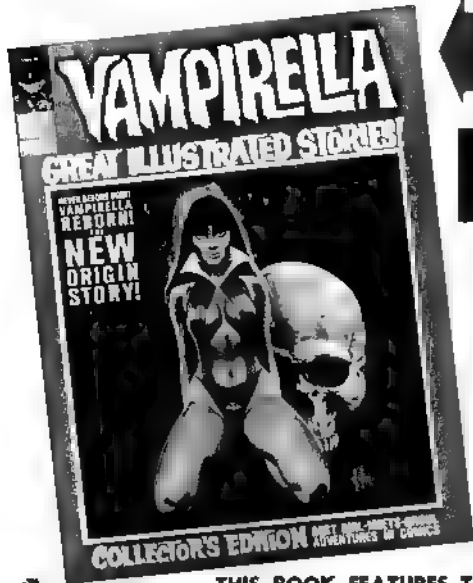
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EERIE FANTASY

Fan writer Ted Dasen of East Lansing, Michigan has written Fan stories for both CREEPY (#35) and VAMPIRELLA (#7). His first work for EERIE, entitled "The Message", appears below. Ted's fame as a Warren Fan author led to a newspaper story in the Michigan paper, The State Journal. According to the newspaper story, Ted has been writing since he was 6 years old. "I wrote the two that were published (in CREEPY and VAMPIRELLA) when I was 14. I was more morbid then." Ted, a sophomore at East Lansing High School, plans a professional writing career.



Fan author Ted Dasen.

The MESSAGE!

By Ted Dasen
East Lansing, Michigan

The word had spread through the North that there existed a small and aging brick fortress for the jailing of negroes—men, women and children who at one time or another had tried unsuccessfully to escape the all-powerful grasp of the Southern Confederacy. They were held as bait. The news was swift in reaching the military of the North. They were not ignorant to the ways of the Confederacy. Obviously, the stone stronghold was a trap to tempt the Union into war. So a plot to free the imprisoned slaves was hatched. If they were to live to see freedom it would be by means of a trail that led to the secret underground railway (the great symbol of freedom to the enslaved). The plot involved a message. So it was inevitable that there be a messenger. One man was chosen from among the blue army's ranks to bear this message. His name was Captain James Con-

rad. Within three days, he was to lead a battalion in attack against the heavily guarded jailhouse. If they were successful, the negroes would be freed. Conrad would tell them the time and place of their entry to the passageway and freedom to the North. His chances were slim for the Confederacy had created their trap well. Late on the second day of the battle, a cannonball pierced a corner of the prison's walls, enabling the prisoners to escape. After the last of the echoing shots was heard, the prisoners had still not ventured through the hole. They could not believe the nightmare had ceased. After the third day, the children were the first to venture out. As the mourners walked among the ungodly horrors of war, they saw a wounded man "Help me," he called. "I fought for the North. The pain's in my chest. Save yourselves. I've brought you a message . . . a way to escape . . ." He stopped short, cut off by a gunshot as a mother ran to her child, screaming about the smoking gun the child held. **END**



This eerie drawing of a lone figure running through a black void is a panel from a newspaper strip called **IN THE INTERESTS OF SCIENCE**. The strip, a collaboration drawn by Michael Gilbert and written by Harvey Sobel, is futuristic in tone and story. It appears in an upper New York state daily. Sobel wrote us recently, asking what we thought of the strip. What do you think?



By Phill Jones
Sepulveda, Calif.

The universe had been left undisturbed for thousands of years. Stars provided only the barest of light in the stygian void of space.

The vehicle swiftly moved toward its destination. The pilot, Karl, was impatient for the results of an important experiment. He despaired over the last part of the experiment, afraid it would end like the previous two parts—in failure. Karl had chosen the Blaine Theory as the topic of his university paper. The Blaine Theory dealt with the number of planets inhabited by beings of a given intelligence level within a particular sector of space. Now he deeply regretted his choice, for the last planet on his list orbited a dying sun. If the planet had not been in an orbit this close to a sun, he might have given

up. In orbit around the planet, Karl knew hope once again. Sensor devices revealed "life" and indicated that the beings lived in small groups. He guided his craft downwards. Particles of burning dust blew on an inhabitant's skin. He was immune through exposure. Undisturbed, he walked to the crude temple of his people. The man watched a small object fall from the sky. He lumbered to the place where he had seen it fall. To him, it resembled a large rock but one which made clicking sounds from within. Donning anti-radiation gear, Karl saw the being who had been attracted to the ship. He had bronzed skin and wore an animal skin. Karl opened the airlock and descended from his craft. After a few basic mental evaluation tests, Karl decided to find a better thesis topic and left the planet. The surface-man entered the temple and returned with a holy object—a worn and tattered book he hoped would inspire him. He ran his fingers over the title of the book as a kind of religious incantation. The title was **BETTER HOMES AND GARDENS**. **END**



Lone survivor of a future holocaust clings to the dismembered head of the Statue of Liberty. Pen and ink drawing is by Anthony DeSensi of Pittsburgh, Pa. whose fan art appeared in CREEPY #40, page 47.

MY, OH, MY!

By Vernon Shelton

Jake Brown was an ordinary man with a hang up—he drank too much. So much in fact that on that fateful night, he had drowned his troubles in every bar he could find. Wearily, he shuffled along a poorly-lit street. "Oh, Lord—won't someone help me?" he cried. Years of heavy drinking had taken their toll. A voice called out, "I will help you, friend." A vampire appeared from the darkness and approached Jake. As the vampire moved nearer, he burst out in a long, sinister laugh which paralyzed Jake with fear. Soon, it was over and Jake Brown lay on the street—a drained hulk of a man. At the sound of footsteps, the vampire fled. But he was unable to move quickly—a vague feeling of numbness soon overcame him. He stumbled. "I...I'm drunk," the vampire gasped. "But I've got to get to my coffin before the sun rises. Got to..." He babbled incoherently as the alcohol in the blood of Jake Brown continued to take its toll. "My, oh, my! What lovely weather. So lovely," said the vampire, not hardly moving. The first rays of sun lit the horizon. "What a pretty sun. So bright and warm." He did not even notice as his decaying body fell apart. **END**



GREETINGS FROM SOUTH AMERICA!

Two artists from Argentina, Ramiro Bujero and Solano Lopez, sent us a sample of their work which appears above. Ramiro pencilled the drawing while Solano inked it. They asked if we thought their work was good enough to appear. What do you readers think of the chilling spectral figure above?

FINAL CONQUERER

By Michael E. Tierney

Three millenia ago, our ancestors had come to colonize this planet. We Dicans had not known one day of peace in all that time. For competing with us for mastery of the planet were the original inhabitants—the Ched. After intergalactic war broke out, we were left as savages. Our weapons were no more than dim myths. Now we were like the Ched, fighting with the sword, axe-spear and whatever else we could produce with our hands. Between the Ched and the ferocious abominations on the planet, only one of us could survive. Now I was the last one alive. Here in the castle Ver, the flower of Dicanhood had perished. I had been witness to the death of thousands upon thousands of my fellow Dicans. I looked up at the midnight sky and distinguished a grey form winging its way toward me—the last Ched. He was ready to combat the last Dican in a futile battle to decide which race would at last be victorious. Even though there was no hope for survival alone, I saw the crimson-stained steel in the creature's hand as it stopped in flight and hovered above me. I was full of blood-lust to end this final conflict. It swooped at me and I par-

aded a thrust, slashing at a wing. Green icor spurted from my sword as a scream rose from the demon's mouth. Fluttering, it fell to the rampart. I moved in. The creature was undoubtedly the greatest of the Ched swordsmen. One or the other of us would survive. My guard soon faltered. Weary muscles and a deeply gashed shoulder from the three-day skirmish slowed my movements. I could not let the Ched win after so many Dican sacrifices. A deadlock developed. Our aching arms struggled. A series of feints opened his guard and I thrust. The battle was over and the last Ched lay in death-throes at my feet. Sagging against the fortress, I rested. The pain was unbearable. Suddenly from the dense jungle surrounding Ver, there was a thunderous roar. Startled, I jerked to my feet. Before me was one of the horrid, mindless abominations that stalk this despairing world. Hypnotizing me with large luminous eyes, the slimy green thing moved toward me, surging its huge mass against the wall, it crumpled the fortification. The Cheds and Dicans were extinct. At last, the Hellish monsters of this desolate world had mastery. I felt and knew final oblivion. **END**



Sketch of Dracula is by reader James Kanhard.

It was a cold, rainy night so Julius and Mara decided to go to the movies. The movie bored Julius so he pecked away at his popcorn and looked around. A wizened, old man came down the aisle and sat next to Julius. Mara never took her eyes from the film although Julius studied the old man. He wore a large, snake-like ring which was copper colored. Rubies were inset as snake eyes. Curved fangs darted under the skin. Suddenly, the movie was over and Julius started to get up. He stopped, short of breath. He looked at his hands. They were an old man's hands. Mara was standing with a duplicate Julius and the old man with the ring was gone. "Excuse us, please," Mara said as the two—Mara and the duplicate—filed past. Trying to understand, Julius decided that the old man had changed himself to look like Julius by means of the ring. He decided to find Mara and explain. When he reached her house, he saw the duplicate awaiting him. "Fool!" the duplicate yelled. "You dared to follow me here. For that, you die!" He pointed his finger at Julius as Mara came beside him. Julius fell dead on the spot, a shrivelled old man. "Oh..." said Mara, "that was that old man in the theatre." Her new Julius smiled. **END**

INTERCHANGE!

By Steven Taggart
Saddle Brook, N.J.

It was a cold, rainy night so Julius and Mara decided to go to the movies. The movie bored Julius so he pecked away at his popcorn and looked around. A wizened, old man came down the aisle and sat next to Julius. Mara never took her eyes from the film although Julius studied the old man. He wore a large, snake-like ring which was copper colored. Rubies were inset as snake eyes. Curved fangs darted under the skin. Suddenly, the movie was over and Julius started to get up. He stopped, short of breath. He looked at his hands. They were an old man's hands. Mara was standing with a duplicate Julius and the old man with the ring was gone. "Excuse us, please," Mara said as the two—Mara and the duplicate—filed past. Trying to understand, Julius decided that the old man had changed himself to look like Julius by means of the ring. He decided to find Mara and explain. When he reached her house, he saw the duplicate awaiting him. "Fool!" the duplicate yelled. "You dared to follow me here. For that, you die!" He pointed his finger at Julius as Mara came beside him. Julius fell dead on the spot, a shrivelled old man. "Oh..." said Mara, "that was that old man in the theatre." Her new Julius smiled. **END**

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FEUDAL AGES AGAIN,
FOLKS! YOU'VE ALL
HEARD OF THE GENIE
IN THE BOTTLE—WELL
THIS LITTLE EPIC'S
ABOUT THE
SORCERER
IN THE
SWORD!
NOW
LET'S
GET
TO THE POINT!

THASA, LAND OF
CRUELTY, RULED
BY THE MAD
MONARCH ARIDES
WHO SPARES
THE KINGDOM
NO COST FOR HIS
OWN COMFORT,
BOASTS THE MOST
BEAUTIFUL AND MAJESTIC
OF ALL PALACES. EVEN AS
HIS SUBJECTS STRUGGLE WITH
POVERTY AND HUNGER, ARIDES
MAINTAINS A PLEASURE-RIDDEN
CASTLE, YET HIS CALM IS DESTINED

TO
BE
DIS-
RUPTED...
RIPPED ASUNDER
AS EASILY AS IF IT
WERE THE SHEER
GOSSAMER OF A
CONCUBINE'S
GOWN....

M'LORD, AS YOUR
ADVISOR I MUST
WARN YOU OF YOUR
SUBJECT'S FEELINGS.
THEY ARE WEARY OF
POVERTY! THERE IS
TALK OF OPEN
REBELLION!

SILENCE WHILE CLIA DANCES,
ZOROMETER! I HAVE NO TIME
FOR WEARY MATTERS OF
COMMON

PEOPLE!
CEASE
YOUR
PRATTLE
LEST I
RE-
PLACE
YOU
WITH
GARTH-
STANE
THE
WIZARD!



YOUR CHATTERING
HAS TIRED ME...
TELL CLIA TO COME
TO MY CHAMBER!

YES,
M'LORD
ARIDES.



AS THE INSANE RULER OF THASA
MAKES HIS WAY TO HIS BEDCHAMBERS,
A STEALTHY FIGURE QUIETLY SCALES
THE OUTER WALLS OF THE PALACE....



WELL NOW - AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE, SIRRAH?

NO MATTER--


... YOU SHALL KEEP HERE, WHILE I ATTEND TOMMY AFFAIR....

CONCUBINE CLIA, YOUR MASTER WISHES YOUR PRESENCE IMMEDIATELY AFTER YOUR MINISTRATIONS....


LIKE A SLINKING DOG, ITS TAIL BETWEEN ITS LEGS, ZOROMETER OBEDIENTLY FULFILLS HIS MASTER'S BIDDING...

HOW I HATE HIS CLUMSY AND PAINFUL GESTURES. ARIDES IS COLD AND HEARTLESS! HE IS CRUEL BEYOND ENDURANCE... ARIDES KNOWS NOTHING OF TRUE LOVE! HOW I LONG FOR A NORMAL MAN--ONE WHO WILL FREE ME FROM THIS LIFE OF ENDLESS BONDAGE AND SLAVERY...


IF I MUST, M'LORD--
THOUGH IT PLEASES ME NOT.



BEST TO PERFUME MY HAIR
WITH SCENTED OILS LEST
I DISPLEASE HIM AND
PROVIDE FURTHER CAUSE
MY EYES... STINGING FROM
THESE BEDAMNED OILS.




WHO- WHO
ARE YOU?



DO NOT CRY OUT,
GIRL! I AM ZARTHON
HERE TO AVENGE
THE DEATH OF
DETHSLAKER BY
GARTHSTANE
THE WIZARD

STARTLED, THE GIRL
ATTEMPTS TO
CONCEAL HER NAKEDNESS.
HER FRIGHT, HOWEVER, DOES NOT
PREVENT HER FROM QUESTIONING
THE HANDSOME INTRUDER...



WHO WAS DETHSLAKER?
AND HOW WILL YOU
CONFRONT GARTH-
STANE, WHOSE
SORCERY IS WITH-
OUT EQUAL IN
MAN'S MEMORY?

ALTHOUGH DETHSLAKER IS NOW ONLY THE NAME OF MY SWORD, HE WAS
ONCE A WIZARD TO RIVAL YOUR VAUNTED GARTHSTANE - UNTIL HE WAS
FOULY DECEIVED AND HIS LIFE ESSENCE IMPRISONED IN A SWORD!

THE SWORD IS NOW MINE - AND BY VIRTUE OF
DETHSLAKER'S SORCERY, BEQUEATHS UN-
NATURAL POWERS UNTO ME! IN RETURN FOR
THESE POWERS, I HOPE TO AVENGE HIS
HORRIBLE FATE WITH GARTHSTANE'S HEAD!
AND YOU, GIRL - TELL ME QUICKLY - WHERE ARE
THE CHAMBERS OF THE WIZARD AND THE KING?

THEY HAVE ADJOINING CHAMBERS
IN THE SOUTH WING OF THE
PALACE

THE SOUTH
WING?!
THAT'S
WHERE
I SUB-
DUED A
FOPPISH
MADMAN!
OH...THAT
I WAS
SO CLOSE!



ARIDES!
I COULD
HAVE SLAIN
HIM SO
EASILY!

ZARTHON! THAT
"FOPPISH MADMAN"
WAS ARIDES - THE
KING!!

M'LORD, WHO DID THIS FOUL
THING TO YOU?

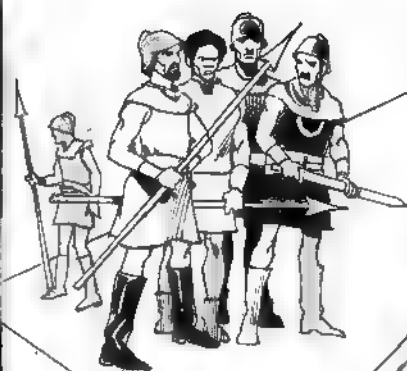
YOU FOOL! WHY WEREN'T YOU
HERE GOONER? CALL THE
GUARDS! I'LL HAVE THE
DOG'S HEAD!



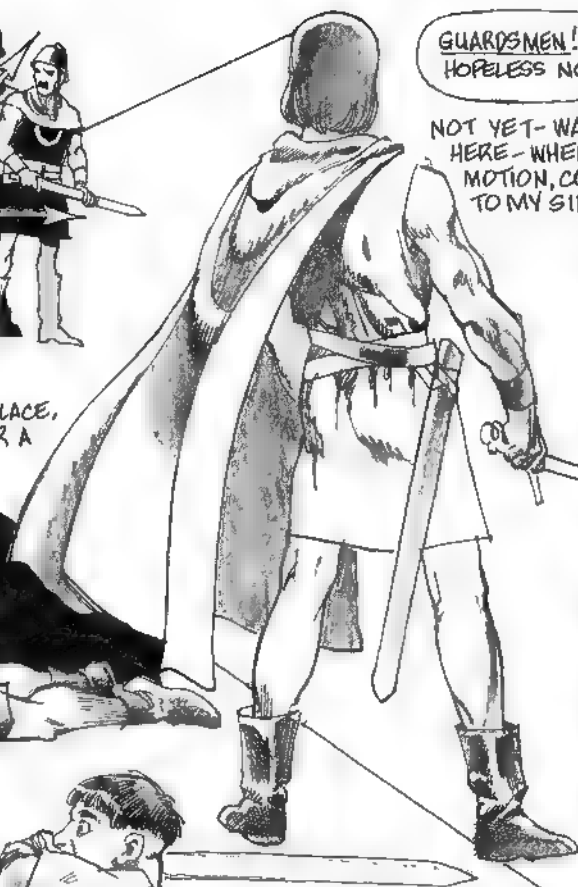
MAKING THEIR WAY THROUGH THE LUXURIOUS CASTLE, ZARTHON AND
CIA HEAD FOR THE SOUTHERN REGIONS OF THE PALACE

YOU'RE CERTAIN THIS IS THE SHORTEST ROUTE TO ARIDE'S CHAMBERS?
THE PEOPLE GROW MORE WRATHFUL BY THE INSTANT! IF HIS CRUEL
REIGN IS NOT SOON PUT TO AN END, THEY WILL STORM THE PALACE!



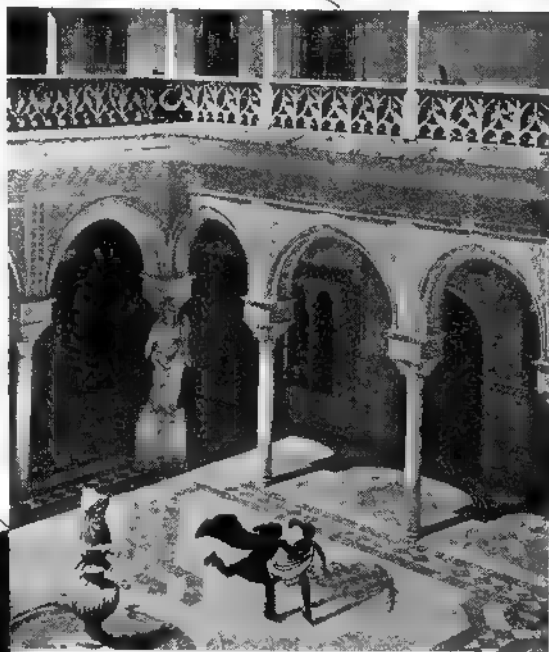


REACHING THE SOUTH WING OF THE PALACE, ZARTHON AND CIA SILENTLY ENTER A ROOM ONLY TO FIND....



GUARDSMEN! IT'S HOPELESS NOW!

NOT YET- WAIT HERE- WHEN I MOTION, COME TO MY SIDE!



ANXIOUSLY, THEY RACE FOR THE CHAMBERS OF GARTISTANE-RESIDENT NECROMANCER.



GARTHSTANE!

IT IS YOU, ZARTHON! BUT I DOUBT IF EVEN THE POWER OF DETHSLAKER WILL AVAIL YOU AGAINST...

THIS!

DETHSLAKER, YOUR TIME HAS COME! IF EVER YOUR POWER WAS NEEDED- IT IS NOW!



ALTHOUGH THE GRISLY APPARITION RAISES THE HACKLES OF HIS NECK, ZARTHON SLASHES AT THE DEMON AMID A FURIOUS CRACKLE OF FORCE--DEVASTATING TESTIMONY TO DETHSLAKER'S AWESOME POWERS!

AND, THROUGH A WELTER OF CRIMSON, DETHSLAKER'S FATE IS FINALLY AVENGED AS GARTHSTANE'S HEAD IS SEVERED...

DETHSLAKER HAS FINALLY GONE
TO HIS REST- THE SWORD...

IS NOW NO
MORE THAN
ORDINARY...
-THE
GUARDS!

EVEN WITHOUT
HIS POWER, MY
BLADE MUST
AVERT THE
COMING
REBELLION...

I CAN
PREVENT
THEIR
BLOODSHED
ONLY BY
SPILLING
ARIDES'
BLOOD!

GUARDS!
SAVE ME!

DEATH
TO YOU,
ARIDES!
DEATH
TO YOUR
TYRANNY!
DEATH!

...AND, OUTSIDE THE PALACE'S MAIN GATES, HORDES OF ANGRY PEASANTS MASS, THE ACCUMULATED FURY OF YEARS BURNING IN THEIR HEARTS....

DEATH TO THE KING!

KILL THE MADMAN!

-WHILE WITHIN ARIDES' CHAMBERS, THE CLANG OF STEEL AGAINST NAKED STEEL RINGS OUT IN OMINOUS CLARITY....

THE KING IS DEAD, ZARTHON --HERE--YOU SHALL BE KING! YOU SHALL BE CROWNED!

NO! WAIT--YOU ARE MISTAKEN!

THERE HE IS!

KILL THE TYRANT!

'TIS HE--THE CROWNED ONE!



WAIT! YOU
DON'T
UNDERSTAND-
AAG!

WE UNDERSTAND,
ALL RIGHT!
EVIL CAN
NEVER BE
DISGUISED-
....OR
MISTAKEN!

THAT SURE WAS A FATAL, FEUDAL
FLOP! OLD ZARTHON SURE GOT
CROWNED, DIDN'T HE? SPEAKING
OF A CROWNING BLOW, DON'T BLOW IT! MY
NEXT ISSUE GOES ON SALE DEC. 14TH. BE
SURE YOU PICK ONE UP OR I'LL CROWN
YOU THE WAY ZARTHON GOT IT.

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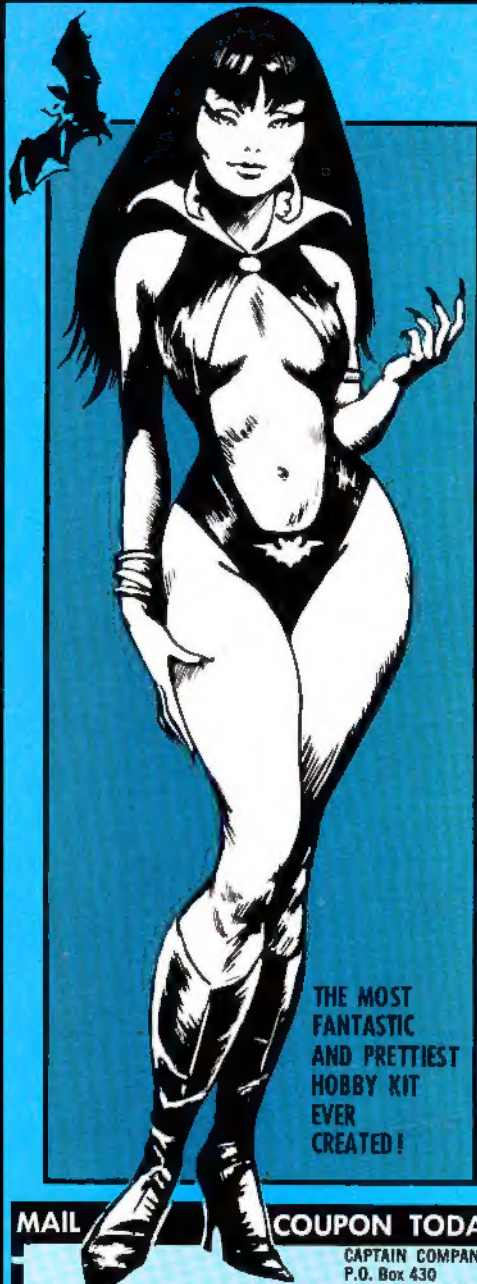
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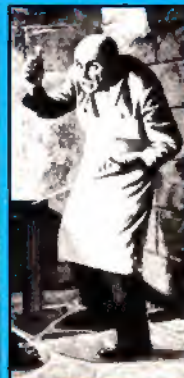
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